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No. 73.

FASHIONABLE AMUSEMENTS.

The following arguments have frequently been adduced in favor of fashionable amusements.

1. That they are *not forbidden* in Scripture, and must consequently be innocent.

2. That many *professed Christians* indulge in them.

3. That, when not carried to excess, they become a means of *relaxation*, and give additional relish to retirement and religious duties.

4. Some, not altogether satisfied with these arguments, adopt a more specious kind of reasoning. They allow and apparently lament the unhappy tendency of fashionable amusements, but conclude that *the evil is past all remedy*. People, say they, will have their recreations. Should they be persuaded to relinquish these, they would probably adopt others still more extravagant and hurtful.

To the *first* of these arguments it is replied, that there are many things not *particularly* forbidden in Scripture, which are, nevertheless, contrary to the obvious spirit of its precepts. We are not forbidden, in so many words, to set our neighbor's house on fire; yet nobody imagines that the wilful perpetration of such a deed is no crime. We reason, in this case, from the general tenor of Scripture, which requires us to respect the property and happiness of our neighbor. Precisely so must we reason in other cases, in which the Scriptures are not explicit. It was never meant that the Scriptures should particularly specify and name every crime of which men would be guilty. A book

which should do this, would be ill calculated to answer the purposes of divine revelation, as few would find time to read its contents.

If fashionable amusements existed, in their present form, during the time of our Saviour and of his apostles, there is no evidence of their being practised by Christians. It will scarcely be pretended that Paul and his associates in the ministry were fond of *cards* or *dancing*. If they frequented the *theatre*, it was only to preach the Gospel to such as could not be met with elsewhere. Their disciples, by imitating their holy example, prevented the necessity of particular precepts. The argument in question is, therefore, of no particular importance, unless it be proved that these amusements are not forbidden by the general *tenor* of Scripture. But it will hereafter be fully shown, that Scripture in its obvious import *does* forbid them.

The *second* argument, that many professed Christians indulge in fashionable amusements, is often resorted to, especially by the young. But if there are many professed Christians who indulge in these amusements, there are, at least, as many who deem such conduct inconsistent with the obligations of the Gospel. Both parties cannot be right. If one is authorized to condemn, the other cannot be authorized to approve. Before the example of either may be safely followed, we must ascertain its correctness. And this leads us back to the general tenor of Scripture, as the most sure and obvious guide.

Are, then, the examples and sentiments of Christians to be disregarded? By no means. It must, however, be kept in mind, that all are not the friends of Jesus who have so named themselves: that the examples and sentiments of those only, whose lives prove them *genuinely* pious, should be esteemed of much account in this matter. Can this be generally said of such as indulge in fashionable amuse-

ments? Do they exhibit conformity to Him who was meek and lowly of heart? Have they "set their affections on things above, and not on things on the earth?" Are they giving "diligence to make their calling and election sure," "lest a promise being left of entering into rest, any of them should seem to come short of it?" Does "the word of Christ dwell in them richly in all wisdom?" Is it manifest that they are "renewed in the spirit of their minds;" that they continue "instant in prayer;" that they live "as strangers and pilgrims upon earth;" that they are "blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, amidst a crooked and perverse generation, among whom they shine as lights in the world?" Are they always ready to give of their substance to advance the cause of Christ? Are they strictly attentive to the proper seasons of devotion? Do the duties of family religion suffer no interruption from their amusements? Do they show themselves to be pleased with serious and improving conversation? Do they uniformly exhibit that piety to God, and that good will to man, which are the surest marks of Christianity? Are they active in promoting those great schemes of beneficence which characterize the present era, and afford so animating a proof that the knowledge of the Lord is soon to fill the earth? Without such proofs of piety, however much we may respect them, they have no claim to authority as Christians.

After all, it is not true, that a comparatively large number of Christians do approve of fashionable amusements. We are persuaded that a vast majority of Christian parents entirely restrain their children from taking part in these diversions, or grant the indulgence with reluctance; and that pious youth generally turn from them with disgust.

The *third* argument is less frequently urged, and with less apparent confidence. He surely betrays great ignorance of the nature of true religion, who regards its duties

as a melancholy or wearisome business. Wretched indeed must be the state of that soul, which seeks to be relieved from the delightful exercises of devotion, by the unsatisfying pleasures of the world. Religion a task? Those who find it so, have much reason to conclude that they have never experienced its transforming power.

Besides, if these amusements give additional relish to retirement and religious duties, why does a little experience in them uniformly tempt to excessive indulgence? That such is the fact, is notorious. A few visits to the theatre seldom fail to create a desire for constant attendance. The same is true of cards and dancing. In the mean time, it is found, that the person, who is proceeding in this course, is daily less disposed to the right performance of religious duties. The argument is therefore false, both in theory and in fact. It contradicts those parts of Scripture which require Christians to separate themselves from the world, that they may live a life of piety. Fashionable amusements send men away from the "Fountain of living waters," to "broken cisterns which can hold no water."

Indulgence in these amusements is objectionable, even as a relaxation from secular concerns. The farmer and the mechanic have little occasion for the exercise of dancing; the mind of the student is polluted and distracted, rather than refreshed, by plays and cards; and the merchant finds, that either of the three unfits him for serious business. Indeed, the time usually allotted to these diversions, together with the violence of one of them, and in all, the long confinement of many persons to a single room, render the plea of health or useful relaxation entirely chimerical.

There are some who, when forced to admit the weakness of these arguments, take refuge in a *fourth*. If we may credit their words, none are more desirous to see a general reformation in morals than themselves; but they are

pleased to add, "As things are, people will have diversions suited to their taste. Persuade them to relinquish these, and they will adopt others still more exceptionable." But this plea, however it may be abused by others, none can justly urge in excuse for themselves. They cannot surely resolve to practise one sin, lest by its omission they should fall into other sins still greater. Let all, then, who feel that these amusements are exceptionable, themselves refrain from them; and let them make a serious and persevering effort to produce the reformation of others.

The Scriptures allow of no excuse for sin. God requires that all men, in all situations and circumstances, consecrate themselves entirely to his service. Prove any pursuit contrary to his requisitions, and we must instantly renounce it; we must do it resolutely and at all hazards. For as certainly as God is true, "the workers of iniquity shall not go unpunished." This argument, then, founded on the comparative innocence of fashionable amusements, must also be given up. It cannot abide the trial of the judgment day.

Having considered, at length, some of the arguments in favor of fashionable amusements, we proceed to show positively, that these amusements are not consistent with the general tenor of the Scriptures.

1. *They are expensive.* How many hundreds, nay, how many thousands of dollars, are sometimes wasted in one night at the theatre, at the card-table, or at a ball! In fashionable amusements, how much must be expended in extravagant dress and useless ornaments! But reason and Scripture demand, that we devote our property, as well as our other talents, to the service of the Redeemer. He requires us to relieve the wants of the poor, especially of the members of his spiritual body. All holy beings are pleased, when we are liberal in promoting the cause of piety. And

if we only look around us, how many sons and daughters of affliction do we behold; how many institutions formed to meliorate the present condition of man, and to open to him the gates of immortality; how many that deserve and call for pecuniary aid! Will a generous individual, will a Christian, knowingly spend that at the theatre, which might save the life of one perishing for want of bread, or suffering for want of a comfortable habitation? Will any man of common humanity be expensive in his amusements, while millions of perishing heathen are extending their hands to him for the only Book which makes known the way to everlasting life? God forbid. Diversions so purchased, are purchased at an infinite cost. When the dead, small and great, shall stand before God, and the books shall be opened, the heathen will rise up in judgment, and condemn both the profession and the parsimony that denied them the Gospel.

2. *Fashionable amusements occasion loss of time.* And who, that considers the consequence of such a loss, would not avoid it with religious care? Time affords an opportunity to do good; to promote the piety and happiness of friends and fellow-men; it may be, to extend our benevolent efforts to distant nations. But it is only when time is connected with eternity, that we form any tolerable estimate of its value. Here all calculation fails; and the mind is left to contemplate and wonder at what it can never grasp. One immortal spirit is of more value than ten thousand worlds. It will survive the dissolution of the stars; and will enjoy, in future, more than *all* finite creatures have *ever* enjoyed, or suffer more than they *all* have *ever* suffered. Yet it depends on the improvement of time, whether we and our fellow-men realize this eternal weight of joy, or of suffering.

Much time is spent in extraordinary preparation for

fashionable amusements; much in frivolous conversation by the way, and at the place of meeting; and much in idle reflection and remark, after the amusement is past. Time so spent is worse than wasted, because it is not only not used for the benefit of either mind or body, but is generally so used as to unfit both for serious employment.

3. *Amusements prevent the acquisition of valuable accomplishments.* By valuable accomplishments, we understand those only which give innocent pleasure, are lasting and useful. Among these, we may include propriety of manners, a well-cultivated taste and understanding, the knowledge of business, habits of industry, etc. These are acquisitions which all must allow to be desirable. Deprived of these, society would want not only its present elegancies, but its substantial comforts; and Christianity, and science, and civilization, would be lost to the world. Though all are not required to engage in the same calling, but may innocently select that which best comports with their circumstances and natural dispositions; yet none are excused from virtuous industry, from qualifying themselves in every possible way to act a useful part in life. Whoever refuses to do this, transgresses the command of God, becomes a moth to society, and should be considered as an enemy, and a disgrace to the human species. Our Saviour aimed at being useful. His disciples did the same. It is the glory of Jehovah himself, that the exercise of his perfections promotes the beauty and happiness of the universe. Ascertain the voluntary efforts of an individual to do good, and you have the foundation for all his just demands upon the esteem and gratitude of men, and what especially renders him lovely in the sight of God.

If these observations are just, it follows that fashionable amusements hinder the acquisition of valuable accomplishments. They consume much time, which might be em-

ployed in attaining important acquisitions; lead to useless thoughts and conversation; and contribute to lower the standard of excellence.

It will not be pretended that the theatre is a school of good manners. People attend the theatre, ostensibly, for the sake of being taught the customs of other ages; of being warmed by the rehearsal of noble actions; and of learning the secret mazes of the human heart. But all this instruction may be better obtained in other ways. The instruction of the theatre is without system, generally foreign to our circumstances, and always connected with much that is exceptionable in language, sentiment, and manners.

Cards answer no valuable end whatever. No man can advocate them in any view, except as a means of banishing the tedium of protracted visits; or as a convenient covering for the ignorance and folly of some, who nevertheless would be thought people of consequence.

Most persons feel the necessity of occasional relaxation from business; and are disposed to seek it in the social circle. There is, however, no necessity of *wasting time*, even here. It is not difficult to render such intercourse, not merely a relaxation, but the means of increasing knowledge and virtue. Accordingly, the apostle has enjoined it on Christians, *whether they eat or drink, or whatsoever they do, to do all to the glory of God*. It is not enough that amusements be, in their nature, harmless, or in some degree beneficial; they should unite the most valuable improvement with innocent pleasure. The Gospel requires, that all men improve their talents to the uttermost. Such conduct honors the divine law, and exhibits a faint image of the moral beauty of man as he came from the hand of his Creator. Thus God is glorified; and thus Christianity is more effectually recommended to the world than it could be by volumes, written with the professed design to recommend it. But it is obvi-

ous, that fashionable amusements do not combine these advantages. Their occupying the place of others which might combine them, is another melancholy proof that they hinder the acquisition of valuable accomplishments.

4. *They unfit the mind for religious duties.* We do not bring this accusation, without having first considered its import. The greatest object of human life is, to secure the favor of God. Without his favor, our natural and acquired talents, our enjoyments and privileges, all which birth, and riches, and influence can give, will serve but to aggravate our future wretchedness. That which entices from God, or unfits for communion with him, threatens our dearest interests. For "what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Fashionable amusements unfit the mind for religious duties, by diverting its attention from them. Here any reference to the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, and especially to the momentous topics of death, judgment, and eternity, is proscribed as altogether impertinent. Serious reflection, too, must be avoided: it would render the passing scene insipid and painful. Accordingly, persons called to mourn the recent loss of friends, or from other causes greatly afflicted, usually refuse attendance. The same is true of those who manifest peculiar anxiety to secure the salvation of their souls. Revivals of religion, though they uniformly promote friendship and social intercourse, never fail to bring these amusements into disrepute. In short, their warmest advocate must allow, that their obvious effect is to divert the mind from the most important duties of religion.

Now, whatever keeps any object uniformly out of view, creates indifference to that object. Of this trait in the human character, very few are entirely ignorant. When we would assuage grief, we labor to produce forgetfulness of its cause.

When we would excite men to worthy pursuits, we exhibit them to their view; we repeat the exhibition; we make them the principal object of remark. Whoever does this, generally obtains his purpose. Religion is not, in this respect, materially different from other employments. Keep its nature and importance out of sight, and it ceases to interest.

Fashionable amusements not only banish religious thought and conversation, but they fill the mind with an inordinate love of those things which reason and Scripture pronounce "vanity and vexation of spirit." In most pursuits, men have their standard of excellence. He who attains to his standard, will be envied or esteemed by all who unwillingly fall short of it. But when the standard of excellence is low, or the objects which create emulation insignificant and hurtful, eagerness of pursuit is productive of the most unhappy consequences. It degrades and vitiates the moral faculties. The man comes to be not only indifferent to religious duties, but frequently to despise them, as unworthy of comparison with the trifles by which he is occupied.

It is almost needless to add, that these remarks are peculiarly applicable to balls. A few useless attainments here procure flattery, while real worth is overlooked.

If cards and plays do not present an equal field for competition, they chain the mind to objects equally trifling and pernicious. Promptness in the ceremonies and small talk of the card-table, elegance of form, exquisite art in putting on that gaudy finery which is the very opposite of modest and decent attire, certainly merit little attention from immortal beings. Yet such are the subjects which interest those who statedly engage in these amusements, and which must have immense influence in forming their moral character. Can he who is dazzled by these trifles, and steadily

bent on excelling in them, be at the same time possessed of the meek and prayerful spirit of Christianity? Without this spirit, all claims to the right performance of any duty are totally groundless.

Thus we have showed, that fashionable amusements are not consistent with the general tenor of the Scriptures; that they are expensive; that they occasion loss of time; that they hinder the acquisition of valuable accomplishments, and unfit the mind for communion with God. Other arguments might be brought, but they are thought unnecessary. It is deemed a sufficient reason for relinquishing any pleasure, that it hazards life or health. Does any one doubt the influence of fashionable amusements upon these? Let him look at the melancholy and daily increasing list of early deaths by consumption, especially among females, many of whom are from the most respectable families. Let him see whether these early deaths are not, in multitudes of instances, to be traced to some vain amusement as their cause. And shall we go on to witness in silence this waste of health in blooming youth, yea, this sad exposure of their lives, so precious to their friends, so inconceivably precious to themselves as probationers for eternity? We have seen that fashionable amusements do infinitely more than this; they pervert our talents, alienate the soul from God, and thus prepare it for aggravated ruin. But, saith our Saviour, "if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell."

Reader, you have a soul of infinite value. Shall this soul be wantonly sacrificed? Will you for a single mo-

ment hazard its loss, for the sake of vain amusements? Oh! beware of so unwise a choice, lest destruction come upon you like a whirlwind, and there be none to deliver.

"I am well satisfied," writes the Rev. John Newton to a young lady, "that if there is any practice in the land sinful, attendance on the playhouse is properly and eminently so. Theatres are fountains and means of vice; I had almost said, in the same manner and degree as the ordinances of the Gospel are means of grace; and I can hardly think there is a Christian upon earth, who would dare to be seen there, if the nature and effects of the theatre were properly set before them. Dr. Witherspoon, of Scotland, has written an excellent piece upon the stage, or rather against it, which I wish every person who makes the least pretence to fear God, had an opportunity of perusing. I cannot judge much more favorably of all the innumerable train of dissipations by which the god of this world blinds the eyes of multitudes, lest the light of the glorious Gospel should shine in upon them. What an awful aspect upon the present times have such texts as Isa. 22: 12–14; Amos 6: 3–6; James 4: 4. I wish you, therefore, not to plead for any of them, but use all your influence to make them shunned as pesthouses, and dangerous nuisances to precious souls; especially, if you know of any who you hope in the main are seriously disposed, who yet venture themselves in those purlieus of Satan, endeavor earnestly and faithfully to undeceive them. The time is short; eternity at the door. And, blessed be God! the Gospel opens a source of purer, sweeter, and more substantial pleasures. We are invited to communion with God, and to share in the theme of angels, and the songs of heaven."

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No. 74.

GREAT EFFECTS

FROM

LITTLE CAUSES.

BY REV. EBENEZER PORTER, D. D.

One hand did the deed, in *one moment;* but hundreds of millions have been involved in the consequences through *sixty centuries.*—See page 4.

Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth.—James 3 : 5.

Every child knows that a spark of fire is a little thing. It is extinguished by a drop of water; or, if let alone, dies of itself. Yet a spark of fire often becomes the instrument of extensive utility or mischief. A spark of fire, from the flint or the match, spreads the field of battle with the dead. A spark of fire is communicated to a magazine of powder; in a moment massy walls of wood and stone, the pride of war, and the labor of years, yield to the

frightful explosion, and, scattered in a thousand fragments, spread terror and destruction. A spark of fire lights in a closet, or on the roof of a building; a family start from their slumbers, to see their dwelling with all its contents, in a blaze. The flames kindle upon the nearest buildings; the neighborhood is involved in the spreading ruin; and, behold, a city is laid in ashes!

The text suggests one leading thought, which I trust is now clearly before your minds:

GREAT EFFECTS RESULT FROM LITTLE CAUSES.

Let us attend to the illustration of this truth, and its application to practical purposes.

The extent of the kingdom of providence, and the connection of minute with great events, is a subject with which our duty and happiness are deeply concerned. When I speak of causes and effects, let me not be understood to exclude, or overlook the supreme agency of that Almighty Hand which created, and which controls all things. What are called the laws of nature, are nothing distinct from the divine will, operating in a uniform manner. In support of the proposition suggested by the text, we derive an argument, then, from the general doctrine of a Divine Providence. The argument is this—God created the world. As an intelligent agent, he must have created it for some end. To secure the accomplishment of that end, he must *govern* it; and his government, to be effectual, must be *universal.* It must extend to *little* things; to all things. So the Bible teaches. The sparrow, though only equal in value to half a farthing, is not beneath the care of the great Jehovah. He feeds the young ravens, and clothes the lilies in beauty, and numbers even the hairs of our heads. This he does with ultimate reference to the great objects of his kingdom. So *reason* teaches. A very limited acquaintance with the connection of causes and effects must satisfy us, that, in the

government of Providence, great things often depend on small things. A moment seems scarcely worth our regard; yet centuries are made up of moments. The mountain that rears its stately head to the clouds, is composed of grains of dust. The river that rolls its majestic tide to the ocean, consists of drops. Here navies float on its waters; but followed backward to its source, it becomes now a rivulet, and now a spring, bubbling from the rocks of some distant region.

The greatest events which the world has witnessed, have resulted from a combination of concurrent causes, each of which might seem altogether unimportant in itself.

Take the subject, to illustrate which the apostle uttered the text. The tongue is a little member; yet it may prove "a world of iniquity, and set on fire the course of nature." We need not draw examples from the monstrous folly of duellists, when so many examples are to be found among rational, sober men, and even in the Christian church. That little member speaks a word. A partial alienation between two friends commences; by the whispering of other tongues, increases; becomes coldness, then jealousy, then enmity. Their own passions, the partialities of friends, the officiousness of tale-bearers, act with combined and mischievous effect, till a trivial misunderstanding, which might have been amicably adjusted in one minute, becomes an incurable and ruinous controversy. Suppose the parties to be pastors in the church—suppose them to be prime ministers of a nation—and see how the consequences rise into incalculable importance.

To change the figure, and adopt that of Solomon: "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth forth water." The breach in a dam, which might have been covered with a man's hand, was neglected, and occasioned a deluge. A fly or an atom may set in motion a train of intermediate

causes, which shall produce a revolution in a kingdom. Any one of a thousand incidents might have cut off Alexander of Greece in his cradle. But if Alexander had died in infancy, or had lived a single day longer than he did, it might have put another face on all the following history of the world.

A spectacle-maker's boy, amusing himself in his father's shop, by holding two glasses between his finger and his thumb, and varying their distance, perceived the weather-cock of the church spire, opposite to him, much larger than ordinary, and apparently much nearer, and turned upside down. This excited the wonder of the father, and led him to additional experiments; and these resulted in that astonishing instrument, the *telescope*, as invented by Galileo, and perfected by Herschel.

It is a fact commonly known, that the *laws of gravitation*, which guide the thousands of rolling worlds in the planetary system, were suggested at first to the mind of Newton by the *falling of an apple*.

The *art of printing* shows from what casual incidents the most magnificent events in the scheme of Providence may result. Time was when princes were scarcely rich enough to purchase a copy of the Bible. Now, every cottager in Christendom is rich enough to possess this treasure. "Who would have thought that the simple circumstance of a man amusing himself by cutting a few letters on the bark of a tree, and impressing them on paper, was intimately connected with the mental illumination of the world?"

Great effects may result from little causes.

Let us pursue the illustration of this truth, as furnished by facts in sacred history.

"The woman took of the fruit, and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat." In itself, how small was this action; but it ruined a *world! One*

hand did the deed, in *one moment!* but *hundreds of millions* have been involved in the consequences, through *sixty centuries!*

A spark of envy, in the bosoms of Joseph's brethren, grew into settled enmity, and led them to aim at the destruction of his life. Here commenced a series of events, which occasioned the removal of Jacob's family to Egypt, and which gave complexion to the affairs of two nations through all subsequent periods.

The seed of Jacob, who came down to Egypt, were only seventy persons. During their residence in that land, they multiplied to six hundred thousand fighting men. The king of the country, alarmed at this increase, issued a barbarous edict, that every Hebrew male child should be destroyed at its birth. To avoid the execution of this decree, a Hebrew mother, having concealed her little son for three months, resolved to commit the babe to the mercy of Providence, with no protection from the elements and the monsters of the Nile, but an ark of bulrushes. Soon a stranger passed by that way, just at the moment that the babe wept. That stranger was a woman, whose heart could feel for a poor, forsaken infant: a princess, too, the only person in Egypt who might safely indulge this tenderness. The child was saved, and adopted as the son of the king's daughter. Little did that princess know what she was doing. That weeping infant, thus rescued from death, was to be the minister of divine vengeance to the kingdom of her haughty father; was to be the amanuensis of the Holy Ghost; was to write five books of the sacred canon, containing the only authentic history of the creation and first ages of the world; was to become a distinguished legislator, deliverer, and guide to the church of God.

Joshua's victorious march into Canaan was suddenly arrested. His army were compelled to fly before their ene-

mies: all was consternation and distress. What was the matter? A single man, out of the twelve tribes, had embezzled three articles from the spoils of Jericho, contrary to Divine command. Achan committed trespass in this thing, "and wrath fell upon all the congregation of Israel."

Restrained by the energy of Joshua's authority and example, Israel prospered; but his death was followed by a rapid decline of piety and morals. In this period of licentiousness, Micah stole from his mother eleven hundred pieces of silver. By a process which exhibits one of the strangest traits in the human character, namely, the connection between depravity and superstition, Micah came to the resolution to appease his conscience, by making this stolen silver into a god. A vagrant Levite from Bethlehem Judah became his priest. From this small beginning, idolatry spread like a leprosy through the nation. The fear of God was extinguished; and such profligacy of manners ensued, even in the beloved tribe of Benjamin, that a peaceable stranger could not lodge among them one night in safety. One of the most dire calamities which flowed from these impieties was civil war. Brother was armed against brother; and in three desperate battles, sixty-five thousand men were slain. "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth."

The sons of Eli made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. This negligence in the judge and the priest of Israel, proved a source of the deepest anguish to himself and his country. These lawless sons, having access to the sacred utensils of the tabernacle, carried away the Ark of the covenant into the camp, to ensure victory over the Philistines. God was angry; Israel was smitten with a terrible slaughter; and the Ark was taken. In the mean time Eli heard what his sons had done. His heart trembled. Blind with age, and bending under the decrepitude of ninety-eight

years, he tottered away to the gate of the city, and sat down there, that he might catch the first rumor from the army. Oh, should the Ark be taken, the glory of Israel would be gone! With what profane triumph would it be told in Gath, and published in the streets of Askelon. Presently a tumult is heard: a messenger has come from the army—where is Eli?—"What meaneth the noise of this tumult?" said the poor old man to the messenger, panting for breath; "what is there done, my son?" "*Israel is fled before the Philistines: there hath been a great slaughter among the people; thy two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead; and the* ARK OF GOD IS TAKEN." Eli heard all with composure, till the dreadful event was announced, "the Ark of God is taken:" that was too much; his heart sunk, he fainted, fell backward, and died. From that day, the ruin of Shiloh was dated. From that fatal day, their candlestick was removed out of its place, and their city dwindled to nothing.

In the sequel of the Jewish history, we read that Goliath of Gath came forth, day after day, and, with an attitude of daring impiety, challenged the Hebrews and their God. The men of war were struck with dismay, and the captains of Israel, with trembling hearts, and at a cautious distance, looked at the mighty man. At length, a stripling shepherd, the son of Jesse, unfit, as was supposed, for the fatigues of war, was sent to the camp on a common errand, to carry provisions and inquire for the welfare of his brethren. By permission of the king, he entered the lists to fight with Goliath. Clad in no armor but faith in the Lord of hosts, and using no weapons but a sling and a stone, the giant fell before him. Thus a common stone, which had lain perhaps useless and unnoticed for ages in the bottom of a common brook, slew the champion, and routed the army of the Philistines, and decided a battle on which the interests of a nation were suspended.

Great effects may result from little causes.

I have drawn out the illustration of this truth in so many particulars, because I wish to impress it on every individual, with reference to the practical instruction which results from it. This instruction may be included under two general remarks.

First. It is a solemn thing to *live* in this world.

We are a part of a complex system. Connected as we are with our fellow-beings and with eternity, every action, every circumstance pertaining to our character, however apparently indifferent, becomes absolutely important. If the history of our race, in past ages, proves this, no less does the course of events within our own observation. We have but lately witnessed the winding up of a drama, in which all the world have been actors. Little did its first authors anticipate the awful lesson of instruction to mankind, which its progress has exhibited. A few licentious men, having organized the principles of anarchy in the heart of Europe, blew the fire in secret for half a century, when it burst into a tremendous explosion. Like Etna's boiling furnaces, it poured out its rivers of flame, to mar all that was fair, and consume all that was flourishing around it. Every monarchy in Europe was shaken. Political and religious systems, reared by the labor of ages, felt the concussion, and fell among the mighty ruins of this sweeping desolation.

I grant that efforts to do mischief are wont to be attended with fatal success, because they coöperate with the strong, downward course of human depravity. The river forms a broader and deeper current as it runs. The rock that is started from the mountain's summit by a single hand, rushes downward by its own weight, but a thousand hands could not roll it back. The mischief which Jeroboam did in Israel lasted through twenty generations.

On the contrary, it is easy to name those who have been

illustrious benefactors of the world. Who can estimate the amount of good accomplished by Moses, by Nehemiah, by Paul, by Luther? Who can pretend to determine, till it is revealed in eternity, the extent of good produced by the preaching of Whitefield; or the number of immortal souls that will be found at last to have been saved from eternal death by the instrumentality of Baxter's *Saints' Rest?* In this view every preacher of the Gospel may well tremble at the consequences which *must* result from his labors; nay, at the consequences which *may* result from a single word or action. With awful emphasis, then, it may be said of the preacher, whose doctrine or life is habitually corrupt, "Good had it been for that man, if he had not been born."

But admitting that it is a solemn thing to live as the ruler of a nation, or the pastor of a church, does the subject apply to persons in *common* life? It does. What though you occupy a humble station: only remember that you are immortal, and that others around you are immortal, and what importance does this single thought attach to every thing you say or do! You take a walk; you read a book; you spend an hour in a social circle. The thing is done and forgotten. But, imperceptibly, perhaps, you have received impressions on your own mind, or have given impressions to some other mind, that will last for ever. Every man and every woman is connected with God's world by a thousand ties, and cannot live, no, not for a single day, without doing good or evil.

You are a *professed Christian.* Perhaps you sometimes forget the vows of God which are upon you, and give such license to your tongue, or to your actions, as to wound the cause of the Redeemer. Did you ever soberly look at *consequences* in this case? Did you ever reflect that what you have done in one half hour, may have influence a thousand

miles distant, or a thousand years to come? A mortal pestilence spread over a city; that pestilence was introduced by a ship's crew, among whom it was generated by a small defect in their ship; and that defect was occasioned by the gnawing of a worm in an oak, that grew on another continent, a century before.

You are a *father*. Do you say, how can I, an obscure man, who have no influence on the affairs of the great world, do mischief by my example? What was that unguarded word which you spoke this morning in your family? *You* have forgotten; but your *child* will remember it, perhaps, to his dying day. Say not, then, I, who am obscure, may act without restraint, especially when secluded from the world, in the retirement of my family. *Obscure!* You are *immortal*. You must go to the *judgment;* and every whisper of your life will be exhibited before an assembled universe! *Secluded!* What if the eye of the world does not follow you into the domestic circle? Is it not restraint enough that your *child* is there? That child has a *soul*, worth more than a million globes of gold. That child, too, may become a legislator, a judge, or a pastor in the church. Take care, parent! You act under a dreadful responsibility. You cannot *stir*, without touching some string that will vibrate after your head is laid in the dust. One word of pious counsel, or one word of sinful levity or passion, uttered in the hearing of your child, may produce an effect on your children's children. Nay, its influence may be felt on the other side of the globe, and may extend into eternity.

You are a *mother*. Excluded from any share in the splendid achievements of the world; is your influence, therefore, to be deemed unimportant? By no means. The wife of a humble tradesman in London had a son, who, at his birth, was apparently destitute of life, and was laid aside

as dead. By the assiduities of a faithful nurse, the expiring flame of life in the infant was happily preserved. His Christian mother dedicated him to God, "and before he could read, taught him the history of the Old and New Testaments, by the assistance of some Dutch tiles in the chimney of the room where they usually sat." That child was PHILIP DODDRIDGE; afterwards, as you know, one of the most useful ministers that has lived in any age.

By whose instrumentality was the prophet Samuel educated for an exalted station in the church? By that of his mother Hannah. Who taught young Timothy the Holy Scriptures? His grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice. Wherever the writings of the late venerable John Newton shall be read, it will be known that the instructions which his pious mother gave him before he was *four years old*, fastened an impression on his conscience, which cleaved to him through all his subsequent licentiousness, till he became an eminent believer and preacher of that Gospel which he had despised. In connection with this, take another fact, which spreads out our subject before us in all its interest. Claudius Buchanan, a poor youth, wandering in the streets of London, incidentally heard a sermon from Mr. Newton, which excited his first religious impressions. How much good has been done by the indefatigable efforts and enterprise of Buchanan! How little did he know, when he took his pen to write on that text, "*We have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him*," that he was kindling a fire, to burn with unabated fervor, in millions of bosoms, when the hand of death should have extinguished it in his own! How many thousands are every day instructed and comforted by reading the Family Bible of Scott, another man to whom Newton was a spiritual father! Look now at this immense sum of good, and remember that, so far as human agency deserves to be mentioned in any case, all

this is to be ascribed, under God, to the instructions which a little child received from his Christian mother.

My second general remark is, that we should never yield to *discouragement* in our efforts to do good.

Though the result of these efforts, in any case, should not be so immediate as we could wish, we are called to the exercise of faith, and patience, and courage, not of despondency. The *first* question is, in every such case, *Is this a good object?* The *second* is, *By what means shall it be accomplished?* Settle these, and there is no *third* question. To deliberate whether such an object shall not be given over, is beneath the dignity and energy of Christian principles. I know that the cause of piety and good morals has stubborn obstacles to encounter. The majority of the world is against it. Still, the friend of this cause may say, with fearless confidence, like the encircled prophet, "They that be with *us*, are more than they that be with *them*." Here again let facts speak for our instruction.

The disciples of Christ were once a feeble, despised sect at Jerusalem. The Jewish senate deliberated whether to crush this sect at a stroke, or to let it die of itself. But behold, "the weakness of God is stronger than men." Twelve fishermen of Galilee, without learning, without power, without friends, erected the standard of the cross. Hosts of opposition gave way before the triumphs of truth; and all the wealth and wisdom, the pride and prejudice, the power and policy of the world, could not resist its progress.

But we need not survey past centuries. The astonishing events which we have recently witnessed, rebuke despondence in doing good.

Look at the Concert of Prayer. A few British Christians, in a private chamber, resolved to set apart an hour, on the first Monday evening of every month, to pray for the revival of religion. The flame spread from minister to

minister, and from church to church, till it reached the extremities of the empire in which it began. From Britain the same spirit has been kindled in various parts of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America.

It is no enthusiasm to hope that all Christendom will soon unite in this concert; and that the spirits of Luther, and Baxter, and Edwards, will look down from their abodes of light, to witness the church, resting from her long conflict and agony, and her prayers, from every part of the globe, ascending in one great cloud of incense to heaven.

Look at the little band of men who formed the first Missionary Society in modern times. With means utterly incompetent to the magnitude of their undertaking, they assumed a motto worthy of the apostolic age: "EXPECT GREAT THINGS, ATTEMPT GREAT THINGS." The history of their labors and successes demonstrates, that no obstacles are too great to be surmounted, no enterprise of Christian benevolence is too arduous to be undertaken in the strength of the Lord.

Look at the British and Foreign Bible Society. In twenty years from its establishment, it distributed more than four millions of Bibles and Testaments, filled the world with kindred societies and the fruits of its beneficence, and its annual expenditures for this sacred object amounted to little less than five hundred thousand dollars.

Look at the British Tract Society. At its fourteenth anniversary, one of its founders said, "I have followed this Society from its birth: at first, we could not number more friends than would surround this table. But this infant has become a Samson in strength." Twenty six years from its establishment it had an annual income of forty thousand dollars; and had distributed more than seventy millions of religious Tracts, in various languages, which have gone as winged messengers of salvation to the ends of the earth.

They have preached the Gospel in the splendid mansion and in the humble cottage. They have carried instruction "to the child in the school, to the traveller on the road, to the soldier in the camp, to the seaman on the mighty waters, to the victim of disease in the hospital, and to the debtor, the captive, and the criminal, within the walls of the prison."

Look at the wonderful efforts to do good, which our own country exhibits. Time would fail to mention the Societies for promoting Domestic and Foreign Missions,* Bible Societies, Tract, Education, and other charitable Associations, which have recently sprung up without number, and some of which are among the noblest institutions of the age.

I ask you now, brethren, to review this subject. Survey the world in motion: the wonderful characteristics of this age of action. Then look at the dear, immortal children, in your families and schools: then look forward into future generations, and into eternity, and say, have you not a *great* work to accomplish? Every man, woman, and child, can do something—can do *much*. Who cannot spare one cent, to buy a small Tract? That Tract, dropped on the high road, or given to a stranger, may carry comfort to some desponding, or conviction to some careless heart; may reclaim some profligate, awaken some drunkard to sobriety, some Sabbath-breaker or swearer to saving reformation.

The day is coming, when men will be accustomed to reckon the establishment of a Tract or Moral Society, or a prayer-meeting, among the instruments of ushering in the glory of the church, and the salvation of the world. It is not improbable that eternity will disclose to us, how the

* In 1808, the spirit of Foreign Missions, which has since excited a deeper interest in the American churches than any other subject ever did, was confined to the bosom of two or three pious young men, with whom it originated.

astonishing events of this age sprung at first from the closet of some obscure saint, like Simeon and Anna of old, "praying to God alway, and waiting for the consolation of Israel."

Courage, then, brethren! Stand up to your work, and go forward. God is with you. The struggle between sin and righteousness is drawing to a close. The storm which has agitated the church is ceasing to rage. "The long night of discord and calamity which has enveloped the world, is passing into a glorious day. With humble hope and joy, we hail the approaching consummation of the prophetic word, when the seventh angel shall sound, and great voices be heard in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.' Allelujah! Amen."

The invention of the telescope, it has been said, resulted from the amusement of a spectacle-maker's boy. On the same optical principles was constructed the *microscope*, by which we perceive that a drop of stagnant water is a world teeming with inhabitants. By one of these instruments the experimental philosopher measures the ponderous globes that the Omnipotent Hand has ranged in majestic order through the skies; by the other, he sees the same hand employed in rounding and polishing five thousand minute, transparent globes, in the eye of a fly. Yet all these discoveries of modern science, exhibiting the intelligence, dominion, and agency of God, we owe to the transient amusement of a child.

The Tract called The Great Question Answered, was one day presented by Rev. Dr. Henderson, at the gate of the royal gardens in Copenhagen, to a young physician who passed by. He read it, and it made such an impression on his mind that he applied to a patient, one of the Moravian

brethren, to assist him in finding the donor. This pious man rested not till he had found him, and informed him of the deplorable destitution of the Scriptures in Iceland. This laid the foundation for Dr. Henderson and Dr. Paterson being engaged in the service of the Bible Society ; and consequently for all the blessings which have flowed from Bible Societies in Iceland, Denmark, Sweden, and Russia!

A New England clergyman, (the author of this Tract,) in 1813, on entering a bookstore in his own neighborhood, observed a small religious pamphlet, recently published, and inquired the price of it. He was told it was sixpence. His mind instantly reverted to the cheapness with which such publications were issued by the Religious Tract Society of London. "That book," he replied, "should be afforded to all who wish to purchase it for distribution, at a penny—and it must be!" He consulted with a few friends. A Tract Society was formed, which issued, in a few months, more Tracts than had before been printed in the United States. That Society, with others, constituted the AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY ; of the final extent of the operations or usefulness of which, the Omniscient Mind alone can form an adequate conception.

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WILLIAM KELLY;

OR,

THE HAPPY CHRISTIAN.

BY REV. HUGH STOWELL,

OF THE ISLE OF MAN.

William Kelly was born at Douglas, in the Isle of Man, in the year 1731. He was descended from poor but honest parents, who resided in the parish of Kirk Bradden, on the south side of the Island. At the parochial school he received so much learning as to be able to read the holy Scriptures. His mother took some pains with his religious education, and gave him the best instructions in her power. Her labor was not altogether in vain; for he took great pleasure, at a very early period of life, in attending public worship. At a proper age he was put apprentice to a tailor;

and, having finished his apprenticeship, he travelled through several parts of England for improvement in his trade.

On his return to his native place, he discovered strong marks of growing vanity; and both his dress and behavior betrayed uncommon levity of mind and pride of heart. He now frequented the company of idle and dissolute young men, and soon learned their vices and imitated their manners.

To supply his expenses, which began to exceed the gains of his trade, he commenced fisherman, and soon distinguished himself by his diligence and activity on board the herring-boat, and still more by his clamor and noise at the public-house. He proceeded from one degree of intemperance to another, till at last he became an habitual drunkard.

Before he arrived at this "excess of riot," he had many struggles with himself, and felt the horrors of an accusing conscience, and the shame of a degraded man. Of this part of his life he never spoke, after his conversion, but with bitter remorse, and the liveliest acknowledgments of the goodness of God in not cutting him off while he was running so desperate a course. After forming repeated plans of reformation; after resolving, and re-resolving, to quit the haunts of drunkenness; he still continued a slave to his appetite, and a dupe to his vile companions.

His extravagance at length arose to such a height, that his credit was totally gone. One day, being unable to satisfy the demand on him at the public-house, the landlady seized his hat as security for the payment of the debt, and he was obliged to hurry home bare-headed, grieved, ashamed, and mortified. This circumstance had a powerful effect on his mind. He began, in earnest, to consider his ways as a sinner against God; like the Prodigal Son, "he came to himself," repenting of his sins, and earnestly desiring to forsake them; but having experienced the in-

sufficiency of his former resolutions, which were made in his own strength, and being fully convinced that "all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works," proceed from God, he prostrated himself before the throne of grace; he earnestly sought help from above; with a "broken and contrite heart" he applied to Jesus, the Saviour of sinners; and, with an entire reliance on the merits, and an absolute dependence on the grace of this compassionate Saviour, he solemnly and deliberately determined to "break off his sins," and enter on a new life.

This resolution, formed in the divine strength, he was enabled, by the blessed Spirit who suggested it, inviolably to keep; and from that period, which was about the thirtieth year of his life, to the end of his days, a term of more than forty years, he never tasted beer, ale, or any spirituous liquor.

His first step after his conversion, was to abandon his former dissolute companions. Though frequently and importunately solicited to accompany them, as usual, to their riotous meetings, he could never once be prevailed on to violate the solemn resolution which he had formed. He now applied himself diligently to the labors of his trade, and was soon enabled to discharge the debts which he had contracted by his former extravagance. Often did he mention the seizure and releasing of his hat, and his grateful acknowledgments to the merciless landlady, whom he always regarded, under Providence, as highly instrumental in his conversion.

The change which was wrought by divine grace in his views and sentiments, produced a corresponding change in his life and conversation. He became *a new man;* his manners, his habits, his pleasures, and his employments, were changed. The hours which he formerly spent in the

public-house, were now spent in retirement. He was frequent and earnest in secret prayer. Often did the rising sun behold him on his knees; and often was the silence of the night broken by his fervent supplications. While his hands were engaged, during the hours of the day, in honest labor, his heart was ascending to heaven in prayer and praise. Many a solitary hour did he beguile with "psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs."

He applied himself with earnestness and constancy to the reading of the Holy Scriptures. This was his favorite employment and recreation. He committed large portions of Scripture to memory, particularly the preceptive and practical parts. These formed the continual subject of his thoughts. They were inscribed on the tablets of his memory, and wrought into the very frame of his mind; so that they were present to his view at all times and in all places, like a guardian angel, continually whispering to him, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Isaiah 30: 21.

He also found great profit and delight in reading books of practical religion, which he borrowed from all his religious acquaintance who were in possession of any treasure of this kind. As a compensation for the perusal of the book, and a mark of his esteem for its contents, he was in the habit of mending and repairing every leaf and back which stood in need of repair; and poor as he was, he sometimes gave a coat to bishop Beveridge, and another to bishop Taylor. His familiar acquaintance with several of our best divines, had contributed much to give him just and correct views of religion. Horneck and Beveridge were his favorite authors. With the writings of the latter, particularly his "Resolutions," he was so well acquainted, that upon hearing him quote the sentiments of this excellent writer, one might imagine he had long been in habits of in-

timacy with the bishop, or at least had lived in his family for many years.

He applied himself with extraordinary diligence to the study of the Manks language; and his proficiency was so great that he was employed as a teacher by several persons who wished to obtain a knowledge of it. In this capacity the writer of this narrative first became acquainted with him; and with gratitude he acknowledges the many Scriptural lessons which he has received from him, the many pleasing and profitable hours which he has spent in his society, and the lively impression which the example of this venerable man has left on his mind, of the power of Divine grace to make the profligate pious, the unlearned wise, and the poor happy. Several of the clergy of this island have similar obligations to their Manks tutor, and retain a peculiar respect and regard for his memory.

His manners were so gentle, his conversation so cheerful, and his whole behavior so mild and courteous, that his company was highly grateful to all who had the least savor of piety in themselves; and even those whose spirit and temper were most contrary to his own, were constrained to acknowledge that his conduct discovered how earnestly he pursued "whatsoever things are lovely and of good report." During the latter years of his life, he was subject to rheumatic pains, and a complaint in his back, which disabled him from following his trade, except at short intervals. The small earnings of his former days, on which he was now compelled to draw, afforded but a scanty subsistence. On this trifling pittance, however, he lived contentedly, thankfully, and cheerfully.

So far was he from murmuring or repining, that he was continually uttering the language of praise and thanksgiving to the God of his mercies. He kept the bright side of every

thing in view. When others were complaining of the times, of the weather, or the crops, he would still find out some reasons for thankfulness in those very subjects of complaint; and would remark, in his favorite phrase, that "All is from Himself"—meaning from the Giver of all good. A grateful cheerfulness was the prevailing temper of his mind; he had a constant regard to that passage of Scripture, "Giving thanks always for all things;" and on every occasion he supported the character of a truly *happy Christian.*

To an intimate friend he once gave the following account of his domestic economy and his daily expenses. His general diet, he said, was bread and water. Occasionally he bought a pennyworth of milk, which he considered as a great luxury; and sometimes he indulged himself with a herring, which his hostess dressed for him; but he seldom or never could go to the expense of butchers' meat. For the garret in which he lived he paid five shillings yearly. He made it an invariable rule never to get any article without paying for it, in conformity to the precept of Scripture, "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another." In this manner did he pass several years of his life, during which it may, with the strictest truth, be asserted, that his whole expense did not amount to five pounds in the year.

As he approached nearer his end, he walked silently and thoughtfully along the shore of eternity, and became still more spiritual and heavenly in his conversation. For nearly the two last years of his life, when his little funds began to be exhausted, and he was utterly unable to recruit them, it pleased that good Providence, who never leaves nor forsakes those who trust in Him, to open a door of relief for his faithful servant. The exemplary piety of this happy Christian introduced him to the acquaintance of a lady who had been long confined by a painful disease, which termi-

nated in her death. During her tedious confinement, she found peculiar consolation from the visits of this Christian friend, and often spoke of the benefit which she derived from his scriptural and edifying discourse. Her friendship procured him many temporal comforts, which he always regarded as coming immediately from God, and for which he abounded in thanksgiving.

About this time, when his wants were probably very pressing, though he was never heard to utter a complaint, one of his young friends, who had long regarded him with peculiar esteem and affection, obtained for him a monthly subscription of sixteen shillings; and on enquiring whether this would be a sufficient supply, the old man with gratitude beaming from his eye, declared that he did not know what he should do with so much money. The event proved that this was, indeed, too large a sum for him to expend on himself; for, as the friend who procured it afterwards discovered, he made it serve three other families. In his visits, also, to sick and indigent persons, he was in the habit of imparting such pecuniary relief as, considering his ability, appears almost incredible.

His little library formed the principal part of his property; this consisted of the Bible in Manks and English, bishop Wilson's Exposition of the Catechism, The Christian Monitor, The Minister's Advice to his Parishioners, Evans' Meditations, and Orton's Sermons on Eternity, which was one of his favorite books. He had formerly possessed "Bishop Kidder's Advice to Young Men," but some person had stolen it from him; and he ever after lamented the loss of that book as one of the heaviest calamities of life.

The few books in his collection he had read and read again, but especially the Scriptures, which were his constant nourishment, his comfort under every affliction, the contin-

ual subject of his meditations, the favorite theme of his discourse, his companion in solitude, and his counsellor in all difficulties. His acquaintance with the Bible was very remarkable. The historical parts of both the Old and New Testament were so familiar to him, that, in recounting any fact from either, he seldom omitted a single circumstance; and, in general, related every incident in the very language of Scripture. The Psalms were his peculiar delight; he had many of them in his memory, and was in the habit both of repeating and singing several passages which he had selected, with great judgment, from the version by Tate and Brady. These, and some of Dr. Watts' Hymns, as also Bishop Kenn's Morning and Evening Hymn, furnished him with abundant matter for the exercise of his talents in Psalmody, for which he was particularly distinguished.

His knowledge of the New Testament was still more extraordinary. The parables, exhortations, and admonitions of our blessed Saviour, and the practical and preceptive parts of the epistles, were all treasured up in his memory, and he would repeat them among his religious friends, with perfect accuracy, and in their proper connection. Whatever was the subject of conversation, it reminded him of some apposite passage of Scripture, of some fact, or parable, or precept, which he was sure to introduce. He abounded much in religious anecdote, and seldom conversed, for any length of time, without bringing forward some favorite passage from "the great Authors," as he termed them, which he had read.

It may be interesting and instructive to the reader to be presented with a few specimens of his religious conversation.

1. Being one day in company where some persons, ap-

parently religious, were speaking with much severity on the faults of an absent neighbor, this genuine Christian, after betraying strong symptoms of uneasiness, at length broke out in these words: "Come, come, my friends, if we can say nothing good of him, let us say nothing at all. Shall I tell you what bishop Beveridge says? 'I resolve,' says he, 'never to speak of a man's virtues to his face, nor of his vices behind his back.' And what saith the apostle? 'Who maketh thee to differ from another?'" 1 Cor. 4: 7.

2. Speaking of the danger of what some call little sins, he used to say, "A small penknife will take away life as well as a large sword."

3. "Supposing," he would say, "that some very rich man were to leave me a large estate; before I had walked round the boundaries and taken the number of the fields, I might be called away. What good, then, would the estate do me? Let me take care to secure the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

4. He often dwelt on this passage of Scripture, "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue," Psalm 39: 1; and frequently repeated those passages in the epistle of St. James, chapter 3, which relate to the government of the tongue; and he would enforce his admonitions by the story of the man who sent his servant to the market, to bring him the *best* article which he could find there, and the servant returned with a *tongue;* being sent a second time for the *worst* article in the market, he again brought back a *tongue.* "I hear many," he would sometimes say, "complain of their having *bad teeth*, but I have never heard any one complain of his having a *bad tongue.* I don't read, however, in Scripture, of any threatenings against bad teeth; but I find dreadful judgments denounced against a bad tongue."

5. When a child has been running towards him, he would say, "My Saviour tells me I must become like this little child, before I can enter into the kingdom of heaven; as free from hatred, and malice, and pride, and guile, as this little child."

6. He was very earnest and affectionate in his exhortations to his young friends, and used often to repeat to them that passage in the 119th Psalm:

> How shall the young preserve their ways
> From *all* pollution free?
> By making still their course of life
> With thy commands agree.

And he would conclude by saying, "Remember the word *all*."

7. He used to speak with peculiar earnestness of the dreadful consequences of drunkenness, and the unreasonableness and vileness of such brutal indulgences. One of his remarks on this subject is worth preserving: "The horse, when brought to the water, will satisfy his thirst; but, after that is done, no power of man can prevail on him to take another drop: while his rider will drink, and drink, after his thirst is quenched, till he becomes more senseless than 'the beasts that perish.' What return shall I make to the Father of mercies, and the tender lover of souls, for sparing me, and leading me, by his grace, to see the error of my ways?"

8. To show the necessity of an entire change of heart, he often mentioned a saying of bishop Taylor's: "If there be a crack in a bell, there is no possible way of repairing it; it must be cast *anew*."

9. Another saying of bishop Taylor's he frequently repeated, with strong marks of approbation: "Though I could commit sin so secretly that no person living should ever

hear of it, and though I were sure that God would never punish me for it, yet would I not commit sin, for the very filthiness of sin."

10. Often would he say, that it was the fault of hearers that sermons are heard with so little profit. "I never in my life," said he, "heard a bad sermon: all the preachers I have heard, warn me to flee from sin; and were all hearers to say to themselves, on entering the courts of the Lord's house, 'Take heed how ye hear,' they would not fail of profiting by every sermon which they hear."

11. "We must put on the whole armor of God," he would say, "if we would come off conquerors. I read of king Ahab being smitten between the joints of the harness."

12. "*Soul-work*," he would frequently say, "is the most important of all work; and it ought never to be done carelessly or negligently. Let me remember, while I live, the story of the poor man who spent the greatest part of his time in holy reading, meditation, and prayer; and who, being asked by his friends why he spent so many hours in that manner, lifted up his hands and eyes to heaven and said, 'For ever, for ever, for ever.'"

It would be easy to produce many similar religious remarks which fell from the lips of this excellent man; but these may suffice to discover the wisdom which is imparted by Divine grace.

There was nothing in the life of this happy Christian more remarkable than his entire abstraction from the cares and concerns of the world. Having no wife or family to provide for, and his own wants being so few and so easily satisfied; his mind was wholly occupied by spiritual and eternal things. He "lived by faith," and had literally his "conversation in heaven." He was seen to glide silently

through the streets and alleys of the town like an inhabitant of another world. The noise and the bustle around him did not interest him in the least. His thoughts and affections were fixed "on things above." He had but one great concern, one grand end in view—"to glorify God, who had called him unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus."

"To a person who was remarking that coals had grown extremely dear, he replied, "Coals, sir, are as cheap to me *now*, as they were *forty years ago*." This was in reality the case, for no fire had ever warmed his little apartment, which, indeed, was furnished with neither grate nor chimney; yet of this apartment he often spoke with seeming rapture. He had found out a variety of attractions in it, which no eye but his could discern. He spoke with particular pleasure of the little skylight which admitted the first rays of the rising sun into his room, and the mild beams of the moon which he used to describe as gilding the coverlet of his bed, and beautifying every object around him. If *the walls* of this garret could *speak*, what a report would they bear of the pious exercises, the earnest prayers, and devout aspirations of its solitary inhabitant!

It was his custom to assemble the people of the house in which he lived, for the purposes of praise and prayer, every evening, before they retired to rest. The writer of this narrative was once present at these family exercises, and was highly delighted with his manner of conducting them. A few neighbors had joined the little assembly. With great spirit and energy the old man began with repeating several practical passages of Scripture, on which he grounded a short and affectionate exhortation; he then raised a psalm, in which all the little company heartily joined; and he concluded with bishop Wilson's excellent form of Family Prayer. The fervent and earnest manner in which he per-

formed these domestic duties was exceedingly impressive, and strongly marked the devout state of his mind.

The same spirit of devotion shone forth when he joined in the public service of the church, on which he was a regular and constant attendant. The delight which he took in the church service was very remarkable. To *him* the liturgy was always new, always interesting; he joined in every petition, with unabating fervor; and his earnest manner of making the responses, and his hearty zeal in singing the praises of God, had a remarkable effect on the whole congregation. This was particularly visible at the Manks service, which was set up in the town of Douglas in the year 1794, for the accommodation of the poor; and at which he offered to officiate gratuitously as clerk. The devout and animated manner in which he discharged this office, will long be remembered by those who attended that delightful service.

The doors of the church were seldom, if ever, open, either on the Lord's day or on week days, but he was found to make one of the congregation. He often blessed God that, for nearly twenty years of his life, he had never been prevented, for one Sabbath, from attending the house of the Lord. This he considered as an inestimable privilege. He was entirely free from all bigotry and party spirit. He was a truly *scriptural* Christian. He loved and revered the Divine image wherever he beheld it; and one of his favorite sentiments was, that *true* Christians are of the same spirit and temper wherever they are found. A few weeks before his death, a friend made him a present of a few of the Tracts published by "The Religious Tract Society." These he regarded as a rich treasure; and was in haste to circulate them among his aquaintances.

A short character of this inestimable man appeared some

time ago in "The Manks Advertiser," which it may not be improper to introduce here:

"Much is it to be lamented, that examples of Christian piety are so rarely seen. They are, however, more numerous than careless observers imagine. In the quiet scenes of domestic life, in poverty, in sickness and affliction, real piety often passes her days, unnoticed and unobserved. A few select friends, or a narrow circle of acquaintance, mark, admire, and love these 'partakers of the Divine nature;' but to a busy, bustling, noisy world, they are utterly unknown. With one of these retired monuments of piety the writer of these lines has the happiness of being personally and intimately acquainted.

"Though the lot of this Christian of the primitive school has fallen in almost the lowest class of society; though his privations are many, and his temporal enjoyments few; though the coarsest viands furnish his daily repast, and a neighboring spring supplies his constant beverage; though his mean apartment contains no more than the furniture of the prophet's chamber, 'a bed, a table, a stool, and a candlestick,' yet is he perpetually cheerful, thankful, and happy. He views the bright side of every object, and traces the goodness of the Creator wherever he directs his view.

"His piety renders him a most interesting companion; his familiar acquaintance with the oracles of Truth has furnished his mind with the most sublime sentiments, such as Socrates would have listened to with silent admiration, and Plato have heard with rapturous joy. His continual converse is with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, who have taught him to *think well*, to *speak well*, to *do well*. He may justly be styled *a practical* Christian, as all his readings, meditations, and prayers, have an immediate and direct

influence on his life and conversation. He sees the shadows of the evening drawing on, 'with hopes full of immortality;' and his silver locks remind him to pass his remaining days as a pilgrim, with his staff in his hand, ready to depart.

"'For these *many* years,' to use his own language, 'he has not promised himself a to-morrow,' but closes his eyes, every night, unsolicitous whether he awake in *this* world or another. Under the homely garb and obscure appearance of this lowly Christian, the reflecting mind traces *the future angel;* and through the surrounding cloud of indigence and infirmity, perceives a ray of the Divinity shine forth. The period is not very distant, when princes and emperors may envy this pious inhabitant of a garret."

No wonder that the end of such a life of solid piety, resulting from faith in Christ Jesus, should be peace and firm reliance on him for salvation. A short time before his departure, the writer of these pages visited him for the last time, and found him patiently waiting for his change. At parting, a hope being expressed, that, if they met no more in this world, they should meet in a better; "O yes," said he, with the confidence of one who knew in whom he believed, "we shall meet in heaven." In this composed and happy frame of mind he continued till the hour of his dissolution arrived. On Friday, 27th May, 1808, he entered into rest, in the 78th year of his age.

His funeral was attended by a great concourse of people of all ranks. At the grave, a poor woman was observed to weep bitterly; being asked the reason of her grief, she said, that she had for some time past received a weekly pension from the deceased, and that by his death she had lost one of the best and kindest of friends. The gentleman and the beggar, the stranger and the native, seemed to vie with

each other in paying the last tribute of respect to the memory of this real Christian. To a numerous congregation a sermon was delivered from Rev. 10 : 5, 6, in which the following character of the deceased was given.

"A personal and intimate acquaintance with our departed friend, for several years, enables me to speak of his religious attainments with much confidence. A more eminent example of constant and uniform piety has seldom appeared. His religion, flowing from a heart renewed by Divine grace, was lively and practical; not confined to the closet, nor the church, but regulating his thoughts, and words, and actions, through every hour of the day, so that it might with the strictest truth be said of him, that he was 'in the fear of the Lord all the day long.' Long before the sons of business or of pleasure awoke from their repose, this vigilant servant of the Lord was employed in his room, or in his solitary walks, in the delightful exercises of prayer and praise. His earnest and marked devotion in our solemn assemblies was truly animating and edifying to all around him; proving that he was 'fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.'

"It was not in the house of prayer alone that the power of Divine grace shone forth in the piety of our departed brother; but it appeared at all times and in all places. When silent, his very looks proclaimed the devout exercises of his mind; and when he spoke, his tongue declared that his heart was fixed on 'things above.' His conversation was always cheerful, edifying, and scriptural. So richly did 'the word of Christ dwell in him,' that he seldom used any other language than that of inspiration. To hear him converse, was almost like searching the Scriptures. Some passage from the sacred volume was the constant theme of his discourse; and particularly those passages which

speak of the mercy and goodness of God, and the wonders of redeeming love. In this marked religious deportment there was not the least *affectation* of sanctity, but heart, and tongue, and life conspired to testify that all was genuine and sincere. His conduct in private corresponded with his conduct in public; and his behavior towards his friends and neighbors was perfectly consistent with his prayers, and psalms, and hymns. The same divine principle influenced his whole life and conversation, and constrained him to abound in offices of love and charity, to the utmost of his power. Though he had but little to give, yet gladly and cheerfully did he give of that little; and often has he literally bestowed his last mite.

"The effect of this steady and uniform piety, was constant peace and secret joy. The power of religion to communicate a happiness which the world can neither give nor take away, has seldom appeared more evidently than in the case of our deceased brother. With few of the outward comforts or accommodations of life, he possessed a treasure within, which made him richer than the kings of the earth. The description which the apostle gives of the first disciples of our Lord, may justly be applied to our departed friend, 'as unknown, yet well known; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.'

"Very lately was he heard to declare, that though there might be many fellow Christians as happy as he was, he believed there was none happier. His happiness was built upon 'the Rock of Ages,' and grounded on the promises of that true and faithful Witness, who is 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' His whole dependence was on the precious merits and grace of his Redeemer. None but Christ, none but Christ, was the language of his heart. Having 'fought a good fight,' having 'kept the faith,' hav-

ing 'finished his course,' he looked forward to his dissolution with hopes full 'of immortality.' He had long regarded death as the messenger which was to bear him to his everlasting home; and had often, with pleasure in his looks, pointed out the little spot where he wished his mortal remains to rest. There let them rest till the morning of the resurrection, when this distinguished follower of Christ shall be made equal to the angels, and shine as a star in the firmament of heaven."

From the foregoing narrative, the reader may learn many useful and important lessons.

1. How unsearchable are the riches of Divine grace, and how unbounded the goodness of God! Who that had seen William Kelly in his unconverted state, wallowing in the mire of sin, and "committing iniquity with greediness," could ever have supposed that he was to become an eminent example of piety, and deserve and obtain the title of "The Happy Christian." If the reader be of the number of those careless and thoughtless sinners who are hurrying on to the brink of ruin, destroying their health, their substance, their families, and their peace, and exposing themselves to eternal misery by indulging in the brutal sin of drunkenness—let him stop for a moment, and attentively consider the state of a man, who, like himself, was once "seeking death in the error of his ways," and yet afterwards, by Divine grace, was awakened and converted, "renewed in the spirit of his mind," and "filled with all joy and peace in believing." Let him learn from this example not to despair of obtaining an entire conquest over his prevailing sin, and of becoming "temperate in all things." Let him not, however, delay one hour to employ the same means. Let him have recourse to secret and earnest prayer to

Almighty God, for the pardon of his sins through the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ; let him also attend to holy meditation, to the devout reading of the Scriptures, and the diligent use of all the appointed means of grace. Let him, like the example now proposed to his imitation, earnestly pray that the Holy Spirit would renew his heart, and enable him to "cast away all his transgressions whereby he hath transgressed;" then shall he too be "washed and sanctified," and "justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

2. The life of this happy Christian discovers, in the clearest manner, the power of real religion to give solid rest and peace to the soul in all circumstances. In a cold and cheerless garret, which to thousands of the sons of men would have been as comfortless as a prison, lived one of the most cheerful and most contented of men. To him this retired corner was the seat of peace, and "the gate of heaven." Here he maintained sweet communion with God, and often "rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory." The Bible was the source from which he derived perpetual consolation. Like "The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain," he had often "little to eat; but his Bible was meat, drink, and company to him."

3. The example of William Kelly further shows, how little will supply the real wants of man, and how independent real religion makes its possessor of the world, and all that it contains. While the busy multitude are wearing away life in toilsome labors and anxious wishes to increase their possessions; while they are earnestly employed in adding "house to house, and field to field;" and are losing the comforts of the present hour, in making provision for years which may never come; the contented Christian, who wants no more than "food to eat, and raiment to put on,"

passes his time cheerfully and thankfully, and enjoys a large measure of happiness here, at the same time looking, by faith in Jesus Christ, to a happiness hereafter, which shall never end. He knows that there is a sufficiency for him in the inexhaustible storehouse of Providence, and is assured that "all things shall work together for his good."

Few persons can hope to benefit thousands; but every reader of this Tract, if rightly disposed, may benefit a few. However low his station in life may be; however unnoticed and unknown he may pass his days; he cannot, in these respects, exceed the subject of the foregoing narrative, who yet, by the power of religion, became eminent, and eminently useful. Let the reader from this hour resolve, by the grace of God, to imitate the bright example which has now been set before him; and following him, as he followed Christ, he will, in God's due time, join him among the ransomed throng, who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises in the eternal kingdom of glory.

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No. 76.

TO-DAY!

To-day means the present time. In this view how precious and important is every moment! Is it not as if it were said, heaven or hell hangs upon a moment? O, fearful thought! I tremble while I write. "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" The present moment is given you to seek the salvation of your soul; but of another moment no man living is certain.

It is affirmed, that "by the circulation of the blood through the heart and lungs, in which motion is consumed and motion renewed every moment, the question is put above three thousand times every hour, and above a hundred thousand times every day and night of our lives, whether we shall stay in this world, or be in heaven or hell to eternity! Alarming consideration—tremendous thought." O God! "I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

Now, what are the solemn warnings of Scripture, in reference to the time in which we are called upon to make our peace with God? Let us hear! "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace." "*To-day*, if you will hear his voice, harden not your heart." "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation."

Are you, then, seeking God, that your soul may live? How many prayers have you presented for an interest in Christ? How much time have you set apart for secret devotion? God and his glorious perfections, Christ and his salvation, the Holy Ghost and his blessed operations, are all nothing to the unconverted man. What are they to *you?* What are ordinances, Sabbaths, the Bible, and means of grace to you? "To them that believe," all these things are "precious."

"As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there may be but a *step* between thee and death." "Pause, ponder, pray." Sparing mercy, what a mercy! Of more worth than ten thousand worlds. Had he dealt with thee according to thy sins, thy body would have been in the grave, and thy soul in hell! But wonder, O heavens! thou art yet on earth reading a little book, a messenger of mercy, which is telling thee that the God who can bless thee for ever, or curse thee for ever, is inviting and entreating, nay, even beseeching thee to escape his curse, and accept his blessing.

O, if thou didst but know the *value* of thy precious *soul*, the worth of God's great salvation, and the blessedness of an opportunity in which to seek his face, thou wouldst not lose a moment: thou wouldst fall upon thy knees and plead for mercy, as a famishing man would plead for food; as a condemned criminal would plead for pardon; and as a dying man would plead for life. And yet it may be that thou art unconcerned about these things, as if there were no hell to be avoided, or heaven to be enjoyed! If so, how deplorable and lamentable is thy condition!

Didst thou ever consider the *worth of time*, in reference to *eternity?* How does time appear to the dying sinner? "O that my time were to come over again, how much better would I spend it. O that God would but spare me a little longer, that I might recover strength and redeem time." A dying sinner, upon hearing the clock strike, cried out, "O time, time, it is fit thou shouldst thus strike thy murderer to the heart: how art thou fled for ever! O, for a month! a single week! I ask not for years; though an age were too little for what I have to do."

But, who knoweth not that time *cannot be recalled?* No force of medicine, no orator's elegant persuasions, no worldling's wealth, no prince's power, can call back one day or hour of time. If they could, what endeavors would there

be used, when extremity has taught them to value what they now despise? What would not be done at last, if *time* could be purchased for any thing that man could give? Then misers would bring out their wealth, and say, All *this* will I give for one day's more space for repentance. And lords and knights would lay down their honors, and say, Take all and let us be the basest beggars, if we might but have one year of that time which we misspent. Ah, no! it cannot, will not be; time gone, is gone for ever; it must therefore be *to-day!*

Of what vast importance is a single hour, nay, a moment, as affording an opportunity for the exercise of repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ; both which acts are absolutely necessary to your salvation.

Perhaps you are young, in the bloom of life: health circulates in your veins; you feel neither cares nor pains; you think it is but the morning of life with you, that you have a long day before you, and therefore you say that it is too early for you to think about God and religion. Now is not your time. No. You think (and it may be only a thought) that you must and will have a little more pleasure in the world; that when you are married, or settled in life, or aged, and can enjoy the world no longer, then you will be religious. In your opinion, it is time to think upon God when you can think of nothing else! Now, what if we put your conduct into words, for actions speak as well as words. What do you say in effect but this: "God may say what he will, but I am resolved to do as I please. I must and will have my pleasure here, if I endure the pains of hell hereafter. God may say, *now;* but I must and will say, *no.*" So then he and you are at perfect variance. He is opposing you, and you are opposing him. And, "woe unto him that striveth with his Maker." He says, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." But you say, "I will

think upon thee when I am old and gray-headed." He says, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." But you say, "No, that is the last thing I will seek." His command is, "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace, thereby good shall come unto thee." But your conduct says, that you have friends and companions whom you love much better than you love God, and that you have no inclination to acquaint yourself with him! You say to him, "Depart from me; I desire not the knowledge of thy ways." And are you, then, thus minded? What! resolved to trifle with your soul, and neglect this great salvation! Well, then, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." But, "because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with a stroke; then a great ransom cannot deliver thee."

Perhaps, reader, you are now in the busy scenes of life; and what you shall eat, and what you shall drink, and what you shall wear, are considerations which swallow up all your cares. At present you say you can attend to nothing else. You remind me of him who, being asked if he had seen the eclipse, said, "No; I have so much to do with earth, that I have no time to look at the heavens." O thoughtless mortal! remember, there must be a time to die, for "it is appointed unto men once to die; but after this the judgment."

How awful, that amidst all the means and mercies afforded you, you are becoming not at all more prepared for death! Not one degree more fit for heaven; but, alas, alas, abundantly more fit for hell! Dying in this condition, what will you do? Where will you flee for refuge? "How will you escape, if you neglect so great salvation?" "If the righteous be scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

When the great day of his wrath is come, how will you be able to stand? What will you say to him? It will then be found that his warnings and invitations, his promises and threatenings, have all been lost upon you! It will then appear that you have shut your eyes against the light, your ears against the truth, your conscience against all remonstrances, and your heart against all the proposals and entreaties of his love and grace! Then, O then, you will see, but too late, how you have resisted and rejected the counsel of God against your soul! Allow me again to ask what you will say to him when summoned to the bar of judgment and the secrets of all hearts shall be open? You will be found speechless! Silent in darkness! But if you will then be dumb before him, what will he say to you? Probably he will address you in language similar to the following:

"O, sinner! your soul is lost for ever! Various have been the means I have used to call you to repentance. Messenger after messenger I have sent to you, to awaken you to a sense of danger and of duty. In my word, and by my ministers, I entreated, nay, besought you to be reconciled unto me. By them I promised to pardon, and threatened to punish. I said, 'Return unto me, and I will return unto you.' I said, 'Come now, and let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' I said, 'As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner; wherefore turn ye and live.' Now therefore judge, I pray you, what could I have done more than I have done to call you to repentance? But, alas, all has been in vain; you loved sin, and hated holiness; you have slighted mercy, abused grace, and, to complete your misery, you have neglected my salvation! And now, you and I must part *for ever!* Justice and righteousness,

truth and holiness, yea, the kindness you have abused, and the goodness you have despised, all combine together and constrain me to execute the tremendous sentence upon you, and to say before an assembled world, 'Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'"

Let us for a moment imagine that we see the effect produced by this awful sentence, and hear the doleful lamentation of a soul in hell!

"O wretched being that I am! I am lost for ever! The die is cast, the doom is fixed, the sentence is pronounced, and all is over and unalterable for ever! There is no hope, no rest, no relief, no, not a moment's peace of mind or ease of body for eternity. I am punished with everlasting destruction! I can neither live nor die! I am in hell, in the blackness of darkness for ever! 'O send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame.' But it cannot be. All the *blessings* in the Bible I rejected, and now all the *curses* in that book have overtaken me! and I am utterly consumed with terrors! Death, darkness, despair, and damnation, are my everlasting portion! O who, who can dwell with devouring fire? *Time* is lost—*heaven* is lost—*happiness* is lost—and I am lost, lost *for ever!*"

"O sing praises unto God, sing praises; sing praises unto our King, sing praises. Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise ye him, all his angels; praise ye him, all his hosts: kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth. Both old men and maidens, young men and children, praise ye the name of the Lord." What! because a soul is lost in hell! O no, my dear reader, but because *you* are not in hell! You are yet on earth, and, if you are prevailed upon to seek his face, may yet be in heaven! O then

. . . . . "*moments* seize,
Heaven's on their wing: a *moment* we may wish,
When worlds want wealth to buy."

"Escape for thy life;" "fly for refuge to the hope set before thee in the Gospel." "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return to the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

My dearly beloved reader, what can be said to you, to engage your concern for your soul? Will you have no pity upon your soul? God, Christ, angels, and saints pity it—and will you have no pity for your precious soul? God forbid. To-day you are among the living—to-morrow you may be among the dead—God grant that you may never be among the damned.

Now, perhaps you are in health, in the exercise of all the bodily and mental powers; soon, disease may arrest you and deprive you of them all. Now, if you ask, it will be given, if you seek you shall find, and if you knock it will be opened! But if, after all that God has done or man can say, you will neglect your soul and his salvation, you must be lost for ever! And he will one day say, "I called, but you refused! I stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; you set at nought my counsel, and would none of my reproof. I will also laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh."

My dear reader, it is possible that he who made you, can make you miserable for ever, or happy for ever! Can he do these things? If so, this one thought alone ought to awaken your attention, and alarm your fears; and you must be dead in sin, deeply infatuated, yea, "twice dead," and assuredly in danger of eternal damnation, if you are not earnestly seeking to obtain the favor of the Almighty.

If, therefore, there be any blessedness in deliverance

from the horrors of an eternally agonizing conscience; if any thing blessed in rest, and peace, and joy, without interruption or end; in one word, if there be any thing blessed in having the God of heaven for your Friend and Father, and all that he can do to make you happy for ever; I say, if there be any thing blessed in any or all these things—by them all I beseech you to "seek the Lord while he may be found, and to call upon him while he is near;" for, "behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Now the compassionate Saviour stands with open arms, longing to receive and save returning sinners. Now he promises his Holy Spirit to them that ask him. Now, in the Gospel he pleads with you; "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest!" "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out!" Now the Holy Spirit pleads: "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." "He (Jesus) was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." God is love! He willeth not your death; he has given his only begotten Son, that you should not perish. He will blot out all your sins, if you come to him, to Jesus, who has bought you with his own blood. *To-day* there is time! O come to Jesus *to-day!* "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool;" and, because your heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, he has promised to give you a new heart and a right spirit. The Holy Ghost will work this great work in you. Have you no desire, no prayer, no wish for pardon and salvation? O, could you know his love, his presence, and the riches of his grace, you would not slight it. He delighteth in mercy! Come then, O come to Jesus *to-day!* Remember, O remember he hath said, "To-DAY, IF YOU WILL HEAR HIS VOICE, HARDEN NOT YOUR HEART."

No. 77.

THE

HISTORY OF A BIBLE;

DESCRIBING

ITS HAPPY INFLUENCE

ON

THE MEMBERS OF DIFFERENT FAMILIES, INTO WHOSE LIBRARIES IT GAINED ADMISSION.

After remaining a close prisoner for some months, in a bookseller's shop, I was liberated, and taken to the country to be a companion to a young gentleman who had lately become major. The moment I entered the parlor where he sat, he rose up and took me in his hands, expressing his surprise at the elegance of my dress, which was scarlet, embroidered with gold. The whole family seemed greatly pleased with my appearance; but they would not permit me to say one word. After their curiosity was satisfied, they desired me to sit down upon a chair in the corner of the room.

In the evening I was taken up stairs, and confined in the family prison, called by them the library. Several thousand prisoners were under the same sentence, standing in rows around the room; they had their names written upon their foreheads, but none of them were allowed to speak.

We all remained in this silent, inactive posture for some years. Now and then a stranger was admitted to see us: these generally wondered at our number, beauty, and the order in which we stood; but our young jailer would never allow a person to touch us, or take us from our cell.

A gentleman came in one morning, and spoke in high commendation of some Arabians and Turks who stood at my right side; he said they would afford fine entertainment on a winter evening. Upon this recommendation, they were all discharged from prison, and taken down stairs. After they had finished their fund of stories, and had nothing more to say, they were remanded back to prison, and one, who called himself Don Quixotte, was set at liberty. This man, being extremely witty, afforded fine sport for William, (for that was our proprietor's name.) Indeed, for more than a fortnight, he kept the whole house in what is called good-humor. After Quixotte had concluded his harangues, William chose a "Man of Feeling" for his companion, who wrought upon his passions in a way which pleased him vastly. William now began to put a higher value upon his prisoners, and to use them much more politely. Almost daily he held a little chit-chat with one prisoner or another. Mr. Hume related to him the history of England down to the Revolution, which he interspersed with a number of anecdotes about Germany, France, Italy, and various other kingdoms. Dr. Robertson then described the state of South America when first discovered, and related the horrid barbarities committed by the Spaniards, when they stole it from the natives. William wept when he heard of their savage treatment of Montezuma. Rollin next spoke: he related to him the rise and fall of ancient empires; he told him

that God was supreme governor among the nations; that he raises up one to great power and splendor, and putteth down another. He told him, what he did not know before, that God had often revealed to some men events which were to happen hundreds of years afterwards, and directed him to converse with me, and I could fully inform him on that subject. William resolved to converse with me at a future period, but having heard some of his relations speak rather disrespectfully of me, he was in no hurry. At length my prison door was unlocked, and I was conducted to his bedroom.

My first salutation struck William. In the beginning, said I, God made the heavens and the earth; and then proceeded to make man, whom he placed in a garden, with permission to eat of every tree that was in it, except one. I then related the history of Adam, the first man: how he was urged and prevailed upon by the devil not to mind God's prohibition, but to eat of the forbidden tree; and how by this abominable act he had plunged himself and his posterity into misery. William, not relishing this conversation, closed my mouth, desiring me to say no more at that time.

A few days afterwards, he allowed me to talk of the wickedness of the old world: how God sent Noah to reprove their iniquity, and to threaten the destruction of the whole world, if they did not repent and turn to the Lord; that the world were deaf to his remonstrances; and that God at last desired Noah to build an ark of wood, such as would contain himself and family; for he was soon to destroy the inhabitants of the earth by a deluge of water. This conversation was rather more relished than the former.

The next opportunity, I gave him a history of the ancient patriarchs, showing the simplicity, integrity, and holiness of their lives, extolling their faith in God, and promptness in obeying all his commandments. William became much more thoughtful than I had seen him upon any former occasion. What I told him he generally related to his friends

at table. Their conversation was now more manly and rational; formerly they conversed only about horses, hounds, dress, etc., now about the history of the world, its creation, the remarkable men who had lived in it, the different changes which had taken place in empires, kingdoms, etc.

He was wonderfully taken with the account I gave of that nation whom God had chosen for his own people, viz. the Jews. I told him how wonderfully God delivered them from captivity in Egypt; how he drowned in the Red Sea an army of Egyptians, with their king at their head, who were pursuing the Jews. But when I told him of the holy law of God, and expatiated a little upon it, he shrugged up his shoulders and said it was too strict for him. Well, William, said I, cursed is every one who continueth not in *all things* written or commanded in that law. He pushed me aside, ran down stairs, and soon became sick and feverish. His mother begged of him to tell her of his sudden distress. He said I had alarmed him exceedingly; that he found himself a great sinner, and saw no mercy for him in the world to come. His mother came running up stairs, and in the heat of passion locked me into my old cell, where I remained in close confinement for some days. But William could not dispense with my company; accordingly I was sent for. I found him very pale and pensive; however, I faithfully told him, that the imaginations of the thoughts of the heart are only evil, and that continually. He said he lately began to feel that; he had tried to make it better, but could not. Upon this a stranger entered the room, and I was hid at the back of a sofa, because the family were quite ashamed that I should be seen talking with William. The stranger remarked that he had seen him talking with me, assured him that I would do him much more harm than good; that I had occasioned great confusion in the world, by driving many people mad. On this, they all joined in scandalizing my character, and I was again confined to my old cell.

But when my God enables me to fix an arrow in any sinner's heart, the whole universe cannot draw it out. William was always uneasy when I was not with him; consequently he paid me many a stolen visit. I told him one day not to trust in riches, for they often took to themselves wings, and flew from one man to another, as God directed them. Job once possessed houses, lands, sheep, a flourishing family, all of which were taken from him in a few hours; but God never forsook him.

William's friends got him persuaded to take a tour for a few weeks, to remove the gloom which hung upon his mind. He did so; but he returned more dejected than ever. The moment he arrived, I was sent for to talk with him. I directed him to behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world: I said, there was no other name given under heaven among men, but the name of Jesus, by which they could be saved; that God so loved the world, as to send his Son into it, to save it by his death. I then went over the whole history of the Saviour, from his birth at Bethlehem, to his death on Calvary; describing his resurrection, and pointing out the evidence of it; then led his attention to Bethany, describing the marvellous circumstances attending his ascension to his Father; and testified to him the wonderful effects which followed, in the immense increase of conversions to the faith. I then enlarged upon Christ's commission to his apostles, commanding them to publish to every creature under heaven the glad news, that Christ had died for the *ungodly*, had finished redemption, and ascended up on high to receive gifts for men, and to bestow them on all who believed God's testimony concerning him.

God opened the mind of William to perceive the importance and truth of these things. He began to hope in God, through the offering of his Son a sacrifice for sin. I advised him now to follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord in heaven, or can continue to see his glory on earth; to have no fellowship with wicked men; to

be a faithful steward of whatever God had given him. I told him how Christ rewarded those who overcame all their enemies through faith in his blood, and by believing the word of his testimony. This conversation made him very happy, and he left me, rejoicing in the Lord.

Some time after, he came with a sorrowful heart, complaining that he did not feel the Lord's presence: that God had forsaken him. I assured him that was impossible; for God expressly says he will *never* leave nor forsake his people; and that he changes not in his love to them. I warned him to be cautious how he spoke against God; for such language is calling God a liar. I told him, likewise, that the church had once preferred a similar complaint against her God; upon which Jehovah protested that it was possible for a mother to forsake her infant child, but impossible for him ever to leave or forsake his people; for he had pledged his *word* to the contrary. Wherefore I warned him to be no more faithless, but believing; and by doing so, he would glorify God greatly before men: it would tend to make men think more favorably of God, and probably lead some to seek an interest in his favor, who otherwise would not. Upon this he cried out with tears, Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief. I change in my love, but thou changest not. William left me, determined to rejoice evermore, and to pray without ceasing.

At first his friends thought religion had made him less happy than he was before; now they declared they had never seen him in such good spirits, and so truly happy. They began to wish they were like him. William longed for the coming of the Lord, while they trembled at the very thought of it: they rather wished he might never come. This was a great advantage he had over them, by the grace and tender mercy of the Lord. He exhorted them to come to the same Saviour, and he would receive them also with open arms.

William was afterwards brought into great affliction. I

told him God sent it to him for good, to make him more holy, humble, dead to sin and the world, and more fit for heaven. He believed me, and praised God for his attention to him, to send this messenger of affliction to do him good. A person who came in, expressed sorrow at seeing him so pained. William replied, Don't sorrow for me; rejoice rather, because God has said that our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory. I am willing to be sick, or to recover, just as God pleases; whatever pleases him, pleases me.

I was never from him during his sickness; he praised God daily that he had ever seen me. He was happy only when he talked with me or about me. He recommended me to all who came near him, declaring that my words created a heaven in his soul. He found me to be the mouth of God to him.

William was completely recovered from his indisposition; by which his knowledge of God, and experience of his faithfulness and love, were much increased. I continued his bosom companion for many years. He walked in the fear of God, and in the comforts of his Holy Spirit, till at length he entered, with triumph, into the eternal joy of his Lord.

After conducting William to the gates of the New Jerusalem, I was sent for to reside with a young man in the middling ranks of life, who had received a liberal and religious education from his parents, lately removed from this poor world. The effects of their example and counsel were evident in all his conduct. He lived what men call a *good moral life*, his deportment was very agreeable, and his sobriety was commended by many. He regularly conversed with me twice every day, and prayed in his closet morning and evening. On Sabbath I talked to him from dinner to tea, and from tea to supper.

An old uncle of his perpetually exhorted him to go abroad to amass a fortune. He did not at first relish the advice. One day he consulted me. I plainly told him to be content with such things as he had; not to hasten to be rich, for he would thereby pierce himself with many sorrows: that numbers were ruined through the deceitfulness of riches. Labor not for the meat that perisheth, said I, but for that which endureth to everlasting life. After this conversation, he reasoned with his uncle against leaving his country and friends, merely to make money in a foreign land: he declared that the object was a pitiful one to an immortal creature, who must soon bid an eternal adieu to the affairs of time. However, after standing his ground for some months, he consented to go a voyage to the West Indies.

He set sail from Liverpool, and took me along with him. As there were several passengers in the ship, all of whom were profane sinners, he was ashamed to let me be seen; of course I was hid in a corner of the state-room, completely masked. On the first Sabbath morning, he took a single peep at me before the other passengers awoke. I hastily told him to remember the Sabbath, to keep it holy; that God was everywhere present to witness the works of men. He resolved to abide by my advice, and to keep at as great a distance from those on board as he well could. They asked him to take a hand at cards, but he refused. Pho! said they, we have got one of your superstitious Christians along with us; we shall have nice sport with him. They teased him with his religion the whole day, and poor George could not well bear it. One bold sinner asserted, that before they reached their destination, they would have all his enthusiasm hammered out of him.

George having none to encourage or countenance him, and not possessing firmness sufficient for confessing me before men, resolved to dispense with his religion during the voyage, and to comply with their abandoned customs

while he continued in the ship. Thus he fell before temptation.

One day, in the midst of his merriment, he recollected an advice which I had solemnly given him. It was this: When sinners entice thee, consent thou not. Immediately he rushed out of the cabin, threw himself on his bed, and wept bitterly. He cried out, (but not so loud as to be heard,) I have ruined my soul; O, what would my worthy mother have said, had she witnessed my conduct for days past. On his return to the cabin, the sadness of his countenance was observed by the company; they laughed heartily, and assured him that his reluctance to join them in what they termed their sociality, arose from the prejudices of education: that he must endeavor to banish all his fears of futurity, and mind present enjoyment. These, and similar observations, gradually unhinged the principles of young George, and before reaching their destined port, his checks of conscience were almost gone. What a dreadful state, when man's conscience ceases to be his reprover! Men are often glad when they obtain this deliverance, but the infatuation is as shocking to a pious mind, as to see a man in the flames, rejoicing in the heat which will infallibly consume him away.

After the arrival of the ship, we all went ashore; and George was soon fixed in a very advantageous situation for money making. When the first Sabbath arrived, he protested against transacting business on that day, declaring that he had never been accustomed to any thing of that kind. They advised him to labor hard seven days in the week, and he would return sooner to the country from whence he came. They told him that only a few superannuated whites in the whole island went to church, and sometimes a few slaves. In this manner he was prevailed upon to conform to the infidel practices of the place. I told him that for all these things God would bring him into judgment; that he was like the rest of the wicked, who waxed worse and worse;

that he did not love Jesus Christ, else he would keep his commandments, notwithstanding all the raillery and reproach to which he was exposed. I warned him that whoever was ashamed to confess Christ before men, of him would he be ashamed in the presence of his Father and the holy angels. George began to condemn his uncle for forcing him to leave his father's house; but as he had come off, he was ashamed to return.

In a few months, he became as wicked and abandoned as any on the island. He made a present of me to a poor native, who could read a little English. I frequently conversed with him, but he could not understand what I said. He often desired me to speak to his companions. A few were greatly affected with what I said. They often called upon me. Sometimes they pleasantly said my words made them very happy, they desired to go to that happy world which I commended so highly. They fervently prayed to Jesus to take them to it. An old slave creeped in one day, inquiring if Jesus could do any thing for very bad people. I replied, It is a faithful saying, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, even the chief. He is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God through him. The black man, bathed in tears, exclaimed, Good book, tell me good news! Like the Ethiopian eunuch, he went away rejoicing.

After some years, I was sent for in great haste to visit my old proprietor George, who, by his intemperance, was brought to the gates of death. In his affliction he remembered me. I told him fools make a mock at sin, but sin finds them out. God had been long angry with him every day. He confessed he had been a great sinner. He said that bad company had been his ruin; that by following their example he had destroyed a fine constitution; that in his distress his bottle companions had all forsaken him; they could not bear the thought of death. Had I my days to begin again, said he, I would flee from a swearer or a drunk-

ard, as I would from the plague. He prayed fervently that God would forgive his iniquity for the sake of his Son Jesus Christ. His fever increased, and in a few days he went the way of all the earth.

After this, I became the inmate of a respectable family which had long been on the island. The master and mistress were professors of religion, but during their residence in the island they had neglected some of its most important duties. They had omitted family prayer until they were afraid to resume it, lest they should bring upon themselves the contempt of the islanders. They had not been careful to train up their children in the fear of the Lord. They sometimes consulted me in secret, but I told them that they were sinning against God; that they must not be conformed to the world, but must love and serve God with all their hearts. But they had not resolution to commence duties they had so long neglected.

At length one of their children became ill and died. They came to me for consolation. I gave them to understand, that it was because they had gone astray that they were afflicted, and that their affliction was designed to call them back to duty. They were at length persuaded of their error, and praised God that he had loved them so much as to chastise them. They now strove to serve God with all their hearts. They listened to me when I told them that they should instruct their children in religion on every proper occasion, both when they sat in the house, and when they walked by the way. The youth of that family became at length distinguished throughout the island for every virtuous and amiable quality.

But what did more to make religion respected in that house, was the practice of family prayer. I was brought out night and morning and permitted to speak before all the family, which was seated around the room in a respectful and attentive attitude. I seldom spoke with more effect than on these occasions. I addressed every member of the family

in their turn. I commanded the parents to treat their children with mildness, and the children to obey their parents. I told the little ones that Christ took little children in his arms and blessed them; and bade the servants do their duty to their master, and the master to be kind to his servants. And when my instructions were finished, all in the house united in singing a hymn to God; and I believe they sometimes made melody in their hearts. When they had sung, my master would kneel and offer up a humble prayer to God. These exercises caused harmony to prevail throughout a numerous family. I observed also, that, although the inhabitants of the island did not relish my master's piety, yet he every day obtained more and more of their respect, in proportion as his piety increased.

I have lived many years, and have seen all those children grow up (I believe through my instructions) in the fear of the Lord. I was by the bedside of their parents when the messenger Death came to call them away. I spoke to them of the joys of heaven, and of its inhabitants, who sing praise to the Lamb, and cease not day nor night. They cried, "Lord Jesus, come quickly," and ascended to glory.

I have always been a faithful friend to all who have sought acquaintance with me. I will be faithful to thee, reader! I will show thee the only path that leads through this world to heaven. Follow my instructions, and you will arrive there in safety.

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CONVERSION

OF

ABIGAIL HUTCHINSON.

FROM

PRESIDENT EDWARDS' NARRATIVE OF A SURPRISING WORK OF GOD IN NORTHAMPTON, MASS., 1735.

THE subject of this narrative was, before her conversion, a person of sober and inoffensive manners, and naturally reserved. She had long been feeble in body, but her infirmity had never been observed to incline her to be fanciful, or to occasion any thing of religious melancholy.

She was first awakened in the winter season, on Monday, by something she heard her brother say of the necessity of being in good earnest in seeking regenerating grace, together with the news of the conversion of a young woman.

This news wrought much upon her, and stirred up a spirit of envy in her towards this young woman, but withal it engaged her in a firm resolution to do her utmost to obtain the same blessing; and, considering with herself what course she should take, she thought that she had not a sufficient knowledge of the principles of religion to render her capable of conversion; whereupon she resolved thoroughly to search the Scriptures, and immediately began at the beginning of the Bible, intending to read it through. She continued thus till Thursday, and then there was a sudden alteration, by a great increase of her concern, and an extraordinary sense of her own sinfulness; upon which she left off reading the Bible in course, as she had begun, and turned to the New Testament, to see if she could not find some relief there.

The cause of her great terror, she said, was, that she had sinned against God. Her distress increased for three days, until she saw nothing but the blackness of darkness before her, and her very flesh trembled for fear of God's wrath. She was astonished at herself, that she had been so concerned for her body, and had applied so often to physicians to heal that, and had neglected her soul. Her sinfulness appeared with a very awful aspect to her, especially in three things, viz. her original sin, her sin in murmuring at God's providence, and in her want of duty to her parents, though others had looked upon her to excel in dutifulness. On Saturday, she was so earnestly engaged in reading the Bible and other books, that she continued searching for something to relieve her, till her eyes were dim.

While thus engaged in reading, prayer, and other religious exercises, she thought of those words of Christ, wherein he warns us not to be as the heathen, that think they shall be heard for their much speaking, which, she said, led her to see that she had trusted to her own prayers and religious performances; and now she knew not where to seek relief.

While her mind was in this posture, her heart, she said, seemed to fly to the minister for refuge. She went, the same day, to her brother, with the countenance of a person in distress, expostulating with him, because he had not told her more of her sinfulness, and earnestly inquiring of him what she should do. She seemed, that day, to feel in herself an enmity against the Bible, which greatly affrighted her.

On the Sabbath she was so ill that her friends thought it not best that she should go to public worship, of which she seemed very desirous; but when she went to bed Sabbath night, she took up a resolution that she would, the next morning, go to the minister, hoping to find some relief there. As she awaked on Monday morning, a little before day, she wondered within herself at the calmness she felt, which was of a kind she never felt before. As she thought of this, such words as these were in her mind: "The words of the

Lord are pure words, health to the soul, and marrow to the bones;" and then these words came to her mind: "The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin;" which were accompanied with a lively sense of the excellency of Christ, and his sufficiency to satisfy for the sins of the whole world. By these things her mind was led into such contemplations and views of Christ, as filled her with exceeding joy. She told her brother, in the morning, that she had seen Christ the last night, (that is, by faith,) and that she had really thought that she had not knowledge enough to be converted; but, said she, God can make it quite easy! On Monday she felt all day a constant peace in her soul. She had a repetition of the same discoveries of Christ three mornings together, but brighter and brighter every time.

At the last time, on Wednesday morning, while in the enjoyment of a spiritual view of Christ's glory and fulness, her soul was filled with distress for Christless persons, considering what a miserable condition they were in; and she felt a strong inclination immediately to go forth to warn sinners, and proposed it the next day; but her brother restrained her, telling her of the unsuitableness of such a measure. She told one of her sisters that day, that she loved all mankind, but especially the people of God. Her sister asked her why she loved all mankind. She replied, Because God had made them. After this, there happened to come into the shop where she was at work, three persons that were thought to have been lately converted; her seeing them as they stepped, one after another, into the door, so affected her, and so drew forth her love to them, that it overcame her, and she almost fainted. And when they began to talk of the things of religion, it was more than she could bear—they were obliged to cease on that account. It was a very frequent thing for her to be overcome with a flow of affection to those that she thought godly, in conversation with them, and sometimes only at the sight of them.

She had many extraordinary discoveries of the glory of God and Christ; sometimes in some particular attributes,

and sometimes in many. She gave an account, that once, as those four words passed through her mind, WISDOM, JUSTICE, GOODNESS, and TRUTH, her soul was filled with a sense of the glory of each of these divine attributes, but especially the last. Truth, she said, sunk the deepest! Her mind was swallowed up with such a sense of the glory of God's truth and other perfections, that she said it seemed as though her life was going, and that she saw it was easy with God to take away her life by discoveries of himself. Soon after this she went to a private religious meeting, and her mind was full of a sense and view of the glory of God all the time; and when the exercise was ended, some asked her concerning what she had experienced; and she began to give them an account, but as she related it, it revived such a sense of the same things, that her strength failed. Afterwards she was greatly affected, and rejoiced with these words: *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.*

She had, several days together, a sweet sense of the excellency and loveliness of Christ in his meekness, which disposed her continually to be repeating over these words, which were sweet to her, MEEK AND LOWLY IN HEART, MEEK AND LOWLY IN HEART. She once expressed herself to one of her sisters to this purpose, that she had continued whole days and whole nights in a constant view of the glory of God and Christ, having enjoyed as much as her life could bear. Once, as her brother was speaking of the dying love of Christ, she told him that she had such a sense of it, that the mere mention of it was enough to overcome her.

Once she told me, that at such and such a time she thought she saw as much of God, and had as much pleasure as was possible in this life, but that afterwards God discovered himself yet far more abundantly, and she saw the same things that she had seen before, yet more clearly, and in another and far more excellent and delightful manner, and was filled with a more exceeding joy. She likewise gave me such an account of the sense she had, from day to day, of the glory of Christ, and of God, in his various

attributes, that it seemed to me she dwelt for days together in a kind of beatific vision of God, and seemed to have, as I thought, as immediate intercourse with him, as a child with a father; and at the same time she appeared most remote from any high thought of herself, and of her own sufficiency, but was like a little child, and expressed a great desire to be instructed.

She often expressed a sense of the glory of God appearing in the trees and growth of the fields, and other works of his hands. She told her sister, that she once thought it a pleasant thing to live in the middle of the town; but now, said she, I think it much more pleasant to sit and see the wind blowing the trees, and to behold what God has made. She had sometimes the powerful breathings of the Spirit of God on her soul, while reading the Scriptures, and would express the sense that she had of their certain truth and divinity. She often used to express how good it was to lie low before God; that it was pleasant to think of lying in the dust all the days of her life, mourning for sin. She was wont to manifest a great sense of her own meanness and dependence. She often expressed an exceeding compassion and love towards persons destitute of religion, which was sometimes so strong, that as she was passing by such in the streets, or those that she feared were such, she would be overcome by the sight of them. She said that she longed to have the whole world saved—she could not bear to have one lost.

She had a great desire to die, that she might be with Christ, which increased till she thought she did not know how to be patient to wait till God's time should come. But once, when she felt these desires, she thought with herself, If I long to die, why do I go to physicians? Whence she concluded that her desires for death were not well regulated. After this she often put it to herself, which she should choose, whether to live or to die, to be sick or to be well; and she found she could not tell, till at last she found herself disposed to say these words: "I am quite willing to live,

and quite willing to die; quite willing to be sick, and quite willing to be well; and quite willing for any thing that God will bring upon me! And then," said she, "I felt myself perfectly easy, in a full submission to the will of God." She then lamented much, that she had been so eager in her desire for death, as it argued a want of such resignation to God as she ought to have. She seemed henceforward to continue in this resigned frame till death.

After this her illness increased upon her; and once, after she had spent the greater part of the night in extreme pain, she awaked out of a little sleep with these words in her heart and mouth: "I am willing to suffer for Christ's sake. I am willing to spend and be spent for Christ's sake. I am willing to spend my life, even my very life for Christ's sake!" And though she had an extraordinary resignation, with respect to life or death, yet the thoughts of dying were exceedingly pleasant to her. When her brother mentioned to her the danger there seemed to be, that the illness she then labored under might be the occasion of her death, it filled her with joy that almost overcame her. At another time, when she met a company following a corpse to the grave, she said it was pleasant to her to think, that they would in a little time follow her, in like manner.

Her illness, in the latter part of it, was seated much in her throat, and swelling inward filled the passage, so that she could swallow nothing but what was perfectly liquid, and but very little of that, and with great and strong strugglings, till at last she could swallow nothing at all. She had a raging appetite for food, so that she told her sister, that the worst bit she threw to the swine would be sweet to her; but yet when she saw that she could not swallow it, she seemed to be as perfectly contented without it as if she had had no appetite. Others were greatly moved to see what she suffered, and were filled with admiration at her unexampled patience. At a time when she was striving in vain to get down a little food, and was very much spent, she looked upon her sister with a smile, saying, "O sister,

this is for my good!" At another time, when her sister was speaking of what she suffered, she told her that she lived a heaven upon earth for all that. She used sometimes to say to her sister, under her extreme sufferings, "It is good to be so!" Her sister once asked her why she said so. "Why," said she, "because God would have it so: it is best that things should be as God would have them: it looks best to me." After her confinement, as they were leading her from the bed to the door, she seemed overcome by the sight of things abroad, as showing forth the glory of the Being that had made them. As she lay on her death-bed, she would often say these words: "God is my friend!" And once, looking upon her sister with a smile, she said, "O, sister, how good it is! How sweet and comfortable it is to think of heavenly things!" And used this argument to persuade her sister to be much in such meditations.

She expressed, on her death-bed, an exceeding desire for persons in a natural state, that they might be converted; and for the godly, that they might see and know more of God. And when those that looked on themselves as unregenerate came to see her, she would be greatly moved with compassionate affection. The sight of one in particular, that seemed to be in great distress about the state of her soul, and had come to see her from time to time, so wrought on her compassion, that it overcame her bodily nature. The same week that she died, when she was in bodily distress, some of the neighbors that came to see her, asked if she was willing to die. She replied, that she was quite willing either to live or die; she was willing to be in pain; she was willing to be so always as she was then, if that was the will of God. She willed what God willed. They asked her whether she was willing to die that night. She answered, "Yes, if it be God's will;" and seemed to speak all with such perfect composure of spirit, and such a cheerful and pleasant countenance, that it filled them with admiration.

She was very weak a considerable time before she died, having pined away with famine and thirst, and therefore

could say but little, and manifested her mind very much by signs. She said she had matter enough to fill up all her time with conversation, if she had but strength. A few days before her departure, some asked her whether she was not afraid of death. She answered, that she had not the least degree of fear. They asked her why she would be so confident. She answered, "If I should say otherwise, I should speak contrary to what I know: there is," said she, "indeed a dark entry, but on the other side there appears such a bright, shining light, that I cannot be afraid!" She said, not long before she died, that she used to be afraid how she should grapple with death; but, said she, "God has showed me that he can make it easy in great pain." Several days before she died, she could scarcely say any thing but just yes and no, to questions that were asked her, for she seemed to be dying for three days; but seemed to continue in an admirable composure of soul, without any interruption, to the last; and died as a person that went to sleep, without any struggling, about noon, on Friday, June 27, 1735.

She had long been infirm, and often had been exercised with great pain; but she died chiefly of famine. It was, doubtless, partly owing to her bodily weakness that her nature was so often overcome, and ready to sink with gracious affection; but yet the truth was, that she had more grace, and greater discoveries of God and Christ, than the present frail state did well consist with. She wanted to be where strong grace might have more liberty, and be without the clog of a weak body; there she longed to be, and there she doubtless now is. She was looked upon among us as a very eminent instance of Christian experience; but this is a very broken and imperfect account which I have given. I once read it to some of her pious neighbors who were acquainted with her, who said that the picture fell much short of the life, and particularly that it much failed of duly representing her humility, and that admirable lowliness of heart that at all times appeared in her.

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THE

YOUNG COTTAGER.

BY REV. LEGH RICHMOND.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.—ABRIDGED.

I SHALL plead no apology for introducing to the notice of my readers a few particulars relative to a young female Cottager, whose memory is particularly endeared to me, from the circumstance of her being, so far as I can discover, my first-born spiritual child in the ministry of the Gospel. She was certainly the first of whose conversion to God, under my own pastoral instruction, I can speak with any degree of precision and assurance.

Every parent of a family knows that there is a very interesting emotion of heart connected with the birth of his first-born child. But may not the spiritual parent be allowed the

indulgence of a similar sensation in his connection with the children whom the Lord gives him? If the first-born child in nature be received as a new and acceptable blessing, how much more so the first-born child in grace! I claim this privilege, and crave permission, in writing what follows, to erect a monumental record, sacred to the memory of a dear little child, who, I trust, will at the last day prove my crown of rejoicing.

Jane S—— was the daughter of poor parents, in the village where it pleased God first to cast my lot in the ministry. My acquaintance with her commenced when she was twelve years of age, by her weekly attendance at my house among a number of children whom I regularly instructed every Saturday afternoon.

They used to read, repeat catechisms, psalms, hymns, and portions of Scripture. I accustomed them, also, to pass a kind of free examination, according to their age and ability, in those subjects by which I hoped to see them made wise unto salvation.

In the summer, I frequently used to assemble this little group out of doors in my garden, sitting under the shade of some trees, which protected us from the heat of the sun. From hence a scene appeared which rendered my occupation the more interesting. For adjoining the spot where we sat, and only separated from us by a fence, was the churchyard, surrounded with beautiful prospects in every direction.

I had not far to look for subjects of warning and exhortation suitable to my little flock. I could point to the graves and tell my pupils that, young as they were, none of them were too young to die; and that probably more than half of the bodies which were buried there, were those of little children.

I told them who was "the resurrection and the life," and who alone could take away the sting of death. I used to remind them that the hour was "coming in the which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come

forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." I often availed myself of these opportunities to call to their recollection the more recent deaths of their own relatives.

Sometimes I sent the children to the various stones which stood at the head of the graves, and bade them learn the epitaphs inscribed upon them. I took pleasure in seeing the little ones thus dispersed in the churchyard, each committing to memory a few verses written in commemoration of the departed.

As these children surrounded me, I sometimes pointed to the church, spoke to them of the nature of public worship, the value of the Sabbath, the duty of regular attendance on its services, and urged their serious attention to the means of grace. I showed them the sad state of many countries, where neither churches nor Bibles were known; and the no less melancholy condition of multitudes at home, who sinfully neglect worship, and slight the Word of God. I thus tried to make them sensible of their own favors and privileges. Neither was I at a loss for another class of objects around me from which I could draw useful instructions; for many of the beauties of nature appeared in view.

Had the sweet Psalmist of Israel sat in this spot, he would have glorified God the Creator, by descanting on these his handy works. I cannot write psalms, like David; but I wish in my own poor way to praise the Lord for his goodness, and to show forth his wonderful works to the children of men. But had David been also surrounded with a troop of young scholars in such a situation, he would once more have said, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength."

I love to retrace these scenes—they are past, but the recollection is sweet.

I love to retrace them—for they bring to my mind many former mercies, which ought not, for the Lord's sake, to be forgotten.

I love to retrace them—for they reassure me that, in the course of that private ministerial occupation, God was pleased to give me a valuable fruit of my labors.

Little Jane used constantly to appear on these weekly seasons of instruction. I made no very particular observations concerning her, during the first twelve months. She was not then remarkable for any peculiar attainment. Her countenance was not engaging, her eye discovered no remarkable liveliness. She read tolerably well, took pains, and improved.

Mildness and quietness marked her general demeanor. She was very constant in her attendance on public worship, as well as on my Saturday instructions. But, generally speaking, she was little noticed except for her regular conduct. Had I then been asked, of which of my young scholars I had formed the most favorable opinion, poor Jane might probably have been omitted.

How little do we oftentimes know what God is doing in other people's hearts! What poor judges we frequently prove, till he opens our eyes! "His thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are our ways his ways."

Once, indeed, during the latter part of that year, I was struck with her ready attention to my wishes. I had, agreeably to the plan above mentioned, sent her into the churchyard to commit to memory an epitaph which I admired. On her return she told me, that in addition to what I had desired, she had also learned another, which was inscribed on an adjoining stone; adding, that she thought it a very pretty one.

I thought so too, and perhaps my reader will be of the same opinion. Little Jane, though dead, yet shall speak.

While I transcribe the lines I can powerfully imagine that I hear her voice repeating them:

EPITAPH ON MRS. A. B.

Forgive, blest shade, the tributary tear,
That mourns thy exit from a world like this;
Forgive the wish that would have kept thee here,
And stayed thy progress to the seats of bliss

No more confined to grov'ling scenes of night,
No more a tenant pent in mortal clay,
Now should we rather hail thy glorious flight,
And trace thy journey to the realms of day.

The above was her appointed task; and the other, which she voluntarily learned and spoke of with pleasure, is this:

EPITAPH ON THE STONE ADJOINING.

It must be so—our father Adam's fall
And disobedience, brought this lot on all.
All die in him—but hopeless should we be,
Blest Revelation, were it not for thee.

Hail, glorious Gospel! heavenly light, whereby
We live with comfort, and with comfort die;
And view beyond this gloomy scene, the tomb,
A life of endless happiness to come.

I afterwards discovered that the sentiment expressed in the latter epitaph had much affected her. But at the period of this little incident I knew nothing of her mind. I had comparatively overlooked her. I have often been sorry for it since. Conscience seemed to rebuke me, when I afterwards discovered what the Lord had been doing for her soul. I seemed to have neglected her; yet it was not done designedly. She was unknown to us all; except that, as I since found out, her regularity and abstinence from the

sins and follies of her young equals in age, brought upon her many taunts and jeers from others, which she bore very meekly. But at that time I knew it not.

I was young myself in the ministry, and younger in Christian experience. My parochial plans had not as yet assumed such a principle of practical order and inquiry, as to make me acquainted with the character and conduct of each family and individual in my flock.

My young scholar soon became my teacher! I *first* saw what true religion could accomplish, in witnessing her experience of it. The Lord once "called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of his disciples," as an emblem and an illustration of his doctrine. But the Lord did more in the case of little Jane. He not only called *her*, as a child, to show by a similitude what conversion means; but he also called her by his grace to be a vessel of mercy and a living witness of that almighty power and love by which her own heart was turned to God.

It was about fifteen months from the first period of her attendance on my Saturday-school, when I missed her from her customary place. Two or three weeks had gone by, without my making any particular inquiry respecting her. I was at length informed that she was not well. But apprehending no peculiar cause for alarm, nearly two months passed away without any farther mention of her name being made.

At length a poor old woman of the village, of whose religious disposition I had formed a good opinion, came and said to me, "Sir, have you not missed Jane S——— at your house on Saturday afternoons?"

"Yes," I replied; "I believe she is not well."

"Nor ever will be, I fear," said the woman.

"What, do you apprehend any danger in the case?"

"Sir, she is very poorly indeed, and I think is in a decline. She wants to see you, sir; but is afraid you would not come to see such a poor young child as she is."

"Not go where poverty and sickness may call me! How can she imagine so? At whose house does she live?"

"Sir, it is a poor place, and she is ashamed to ask you to come there. Her neighbors are noisy, wicked people. They all make game at poor Jane, because she reads her Bible so much."

"Do not tell me about poor places and wicked people! that is the very situation where a minister of the Gospel is called to do the most good. I shall go to see her; you may let her know my intention."

"I will, sir; I go in most days to speak to her, and it does one's heart good to hear her talk."

"Indeed!" said I; "what does she talk about?"

"Talk about, poor child! why, nothing but good things, such as the Bible, and Jesus Christ, and life and death, and her soul, and heaven and hell, and your discourses, and the books you used to teach her, sir. Many scoff at her, and say they suppose Jane counts herself better than other folks. But she does not mind all that. She will read her books, and then talk so pretty to her mother, and beg that she would think about her soul."

"The Lord forgive me," thought I, "for not being more attentive to this poor child's case." I seemed to feel the importance of early instruction more than ever I had done before, and felt a rising hope that this girl might prove a kind of first fruits of my labors.

I now recollected her quiet, orderly, diligent attendance on our little weekly meetings; and her marked approbation of the epitaph, as related above, rushed into my thoughts. "I really hope," said I, "this dear child will prove a true

child of God. And if so, what a mercy to her, and what a mercy for me."

The next morning I went to see the child. Her dwelling was of the humblest kind. Jane was in bed up stairs. I found no one in the house with her, except the woman who had brought me the message on the evening before. The instant I looked on the girl I perceived a very marked change in her countenance; it had acquired the consumptive hue, both white and red. A delicacy unknown to it before quite surprised me, owing to the alteration it produced in her look. She received me first with a very sweet smile, and then instantly burst into a flood of tears, just sobbing out, "I am so glad to see you, sir."

"I am very much concerned at your being so ill, my child, and grieved that I was not sooner aware of your state. But I hope the Lord designs it for your good." Her eye, not her tongue, powerfully expressed, "I hope and think he does."

"Well, my poor child, since you can no longer come to see me, I will come and see you, and we will talk over the subjects which I have been used to explain to you."

"Indeed, sir, I shall be so glad."

"That I believe she will," said the woman; "for she loves to talk of nothing so much as what she has heard you say in your sermons, and in the books you have given her."

"Are you really desirous, my dear child, to be a true Christian?"

"O! yes, yes, sir, I am sure I desire that above all things."

I was astonished and delighted at the earnestness and simplicity with which she spoke these words.

"Sir," added she, "I have been thinking, as I lay on my bed for many weeks past, how good you are to in-

struct us poor children: what must become of us without it?"

"I am truly glad to perceive that my instructions have not been lost upon you, and pray God that this your present sickness may be an instrument of blessing, in his hands, to prove, humble, and sanctify you. My dear child, you have a soul, an immortal soul, to think of; you remember what I have often said to you about the value of a soul: What would it profit a man, to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

"Yes, sir, I remember well you told us that when our bodies are put into the grave, our souls will then go either to the good or the bad place."

"And to which of these places do you think that, as a sinner in the sight of God, you deserve to go?"

"To the bad one, sir."

"What, to everlasting destruction?"

"Yes, sir."

"Why so?"

"Because I am a great sinner."

"And must all great sinners go to hell?"

"They all deserve it; and I am sure I do."

"But is there no way of escape? Is there no way for a great sinner to be saved?"

"Yes, sir; Christ is the Saviour."

"And whom does he save?"

"All believers."

"And do you believe in Christ yourself?"

"I do not know, sir; I wish I did; but I feel that I love him."

"What do you love him for?"

"Because he is good to poor children's souls like mine."

"What has he done for you?"

"He died for me, sir, and what could he do more?"

"And what do you hope to gain by his death?"

"A good place when I die, if I believe in him, and love him."

"Have you felt any uneasiness on account of your soul?"

"O! yes, sir, a great deal. When you used to talk to us children on Saturdays, I often felt as if I could hardly bear it, and wondered that others could seem so careless. I thought I was not fit to die. I thought of all the bad things I had ever done and said, and believed God must be very angry with me; for you often told us, that God would not be mocked; and that Christ said, if we were not converted we could not go to heaven. Sometimes I thought I was so young it did not signify: and then again it seemed to me a great sin to think so; for I knew I was old enough to see what was right and what was wrong; and so God had a just right to be angry when I did wrong. Besides, I could see that my heart was not right; and how could such a heart be fit for heaven? Indeed, sir, I used to feel very uneasy."

"My dear Jane, I wish I had known all this before. Why did you never tell me about it?"

"Sir, I durst not. Indeed, I could not well say what was the matter with me; and I thought you would look upon me as very bold, if I had spoken about myself to such a gentleman as you; yet I often wished that you knew what I felt and feared. Sometimes, as we went away from your house, I could not help crying; and then the other children laughed and jeered at me, and said I was going to be very good they supposed, or at least to make people think so. Sometimes, sir, I fancied you did not think so well of me as of the rest, and that hurt me; yet I knew I deserved no particular favor, because I was the chief of sinners."

"My dear, what made St. Paul say he was the chief of

sinners? In what verse of the Bible do you find this expression, 'the chief of sinners?' Can you repeat it?"

"'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;' is not that right, sir?"

"Yes, my child, it is right; and I hope that the same conviction which St. Paul had at that moment, has made you sensible of the same truth. Christ came into the world to save sinners; my dear child, remember, now and for evermore, that Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners."

"Sir, I am so glad he did. It makes me hope that he will save me, though I am a poor sinful girl. Sir, I am very ill, and I do not think I shall ever get well again. I want to go to Christ, if I die."

"Go to Christ while you live, my dear child, and he will not cast you away when you die. He that said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me,' waits to be gracious to them, and forbids them not. What made you first think so seriously about the state of your soul?"

"Your talking about the graves in the churchyard, and telling us how many young children were buried there. I remember you said one day, near twelve months ago, 'Children, where will you be a hundred years hence? Children, where do you think you shall go when you die? Children, if you were to die to-night, are you sure you should go to Christ and be happy?' Sir, I shall never forget your saying 'children' three times together in that solemn way."

"Did you never before that day feel any desire about your soul?"

"Yes, sir, I think I first had that desire almost as soon as you began to teach us on Saturday afternoons; but on that day I felt as I never did before. I shall never forget it. All the way as I went home, and all that night, those words

were in my thoughts: 'Children, where do you think you shall go when you die?' I thought I must leave off all my bad ways, or where should I go when I died?"

"And what effect did these thoughts produce in your mind?"

"Sir, I tried to live better, and I did leave off many bad ways; but the more I strove, the more difficult I found it, my heart seemed so hard; and then I could not tell any one my case."

"Could not you tell it to the Lord, who hears and answers prayer?"

"My prayers (here she blushed and sighed) are very poor at the best, and at that time I scarcely knew how to pray at all as I ought. But I did sometimes ask the Lord for a better heart."

There was a character in all this conversation which marked a truly sincere and enlightened state of mind. She spoke with all the simplicity of a child, and yet the seriousness of a Christian. I could scarcely persuade myself that she was the same girl I had been accustomed to see in past time. Her countenance was filled with interesting affections, and always spoke much more than her tongue could utter. At the same time, she now possessed an ease and liberty in speaking, to which she had formerly been a stranger; nevertheless she was modest, humble, and unassuming. Her readiness to converse was the result of spiritual anxiety, not childish forwardness. The marks of a divine change were too prominent to be easily mistaken; and in this very child I, for the first time, witnessed the evident testimonies of such a change. How encouraging, how profitable to my own soul!

"Sir," continued little Jane, "I had one day been thinking that I was neither fit to live or die; for I could find no comfort in this world, and I was sure I deserved none in the

other. On that day you sent me to learn the verse on Mrs. B——'s headstone, and then I read that on the one next to it."

"I very well remember it, Jane; you came back and repeated them both to me."

"There were two lines in it which made me think and meditate a great deal."

"Which are they?"

"'Hail, glorious Gospel! heavenly light, whereby
We live with comfort, and with comfort die.'

I wished that glorious Gospel was mine, that I might live and die with comfort; and it seemed as if I thought it would be so. I never felt so happy about my soul before. The words were often in my thoughts,

'Live with comfort, and with comfort die.'"

"Glorious Gospel, indeed!" I thought.

"My dear child, what is the meaning of the word Gospel?"

"Good news."

"Good news for whom?"

"For wicked sinners, sir."

"Who sends this good news for wicked sinners?"

"The Lord Almighty."

"And who brings this good news?"

"Sir, *you* brought it to *me*."

Here my soul melted in an instant, and I could not repress the tears which the emotion excited. The last answer was equally unexpected and affecting. I felt a father's tenderness and gratitude for a first-born child.

Jane wept likewise. After a little pause she said,

"O, sir! I wish you would speak to my father, and

mother, and little brother; for I am afraid they are going on very badly."

"How so?"

"Sir, they drink, and swear, and quarrel, and do not like what is good; and it does grieve me so, I cannot bear it. If I speak a word to them about it, they are very angry, and laugh and bid me be quiet, and not set up for their teacher. Sir, I am ashamed to tell you this of them, but I hope it is not wrong; I mean it for their good."

"I wish your prayers and endeavors for their sake may be blessed; I will do also what I can."

I then prayed with the child, and promised to visit her constantly.

As I returned home, my heart was filled with thankfulness for what I had seen and heard.

Divine grace educates the reasoning faculties of the soul, as well as the best affections of the heart; and happily consecrates them both to the glory of the Redeemer. Neither the disadvantages of poverty, nor the inexperience of childhood, are barriers able to resist the mighty influences of the Spirit of God, when he goeth forth "where he listeth." "God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."

Little Jane's illness was of a lingering nature. I often visited her. The soul of this young Christian was gradually, but effectually preparing for heaven. I have seldom witnessed in any older person, under similar circumstances, stronger marks of earnest inquiry, continual seriousness, and holy affections. One morning as I was walking through the churchyard, in my way to visit her, I stopped to look at the epitaph which had made such a deep impression on her mind. I was struck with the reflection of the impor-

tant consequences which might result from a more frequent and judicious attention to the inscriptions placed in our burying-grounds, as memorials of the departed. I wish that every gravestone might not only record the names of our deceased friends, but also proclaim the name of Jesus, as the only name given under heaven whereby men can be saved. Perhaps, if the ministers of religion were to interest themselves in this matter, and accustom their people to consult them as to the nature of the monumental inscriptions which they wish to introduce into churches and churchyards, a gradual improvement would take place in this respect. What is offensive, useless, or erroneous, would no longer find admittance, and a succession of valuable warning and consolation to the living would perpetuate the memory of the dead.

When I arrived at Jane's cottage, I found her in bed, reading Dr. Watts's Hymns for Children, in which she took great pleasure.

"What are you reading this morning, Jane?"

"Sir, I have been thinking very much about some verses in my little book. Here they are:

'There is an hour when I must die,
Nor do I know how soon 't will come;
A thousand children, young as I,
Are called by death to hear their doom.

Let me improve the hours I have,
Before the day of grace is fled;
There 's no repentance in the grave,
Nor pardon offered to the dead.'

Sir, I feel all that to be very true, and I am afraid I do not improve the hours I have, as I ought to do. I think I shall not live very long; and when I remember my sins I say,

'Lord, at thy feet ashamed I lie,
Upward I dare not look;
Pardon my sins before I die,
And blot them from thy book.'

Do you think he *will* pardon me, sir?"

"My dear child, I have great hopes that he has pardoned you; that he has heard your prayers, and put you into the number of his true children already. You have had strong proofs of his mercy to your soul."

"Yes, sir, I have; and I wish to love and bless him for it. He is good, *very* good."

It had for some time past occurred to my mind, that a course of *regulated* conversations on the first principles of religion would be very desirable, from time to time, for this interesting child's sake; and I thought the Church Catechism would be a proper groundwork for that purpose.

"Jane," said I, "you can repeat the Catechism?"

"Yes, sir, but I think that has been one of my sins in the sight of God."

"What, repeating your Catechism?"

"Yes, sir, in such a way as I used to do it."

"How was that?"

"Very carelessly indeed. I never thought about the meaning of the words, and that must be very wrong. Sir, the Catechism is full of good things; I wish I understood them better."

"Well then, my child, we will talk a little about those good things which, as you truly say, are contained in the Catechism. Did you ever consider what it is to be a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven?"

"I think, sir, I have lately considered it a good deal; and I want to be such, not only in name, but in deed and in truth. You once told me, sir, that 'as the branch is to the

vine, and the stone to the building, and the limb to the body and the head, so is a true believer to the Lord Jesus Christ.' But how am I to know that I belong to Christ as a true member, which you said one day in the church, means the same as a *limb* of the body ?"

"Do you love Christ now in a way you never used to do before ?"

"Yes, I think so, indeed."

"Why do you love him ?"

"Because he first loved me ; he died for sinners."

"How do you know that he first loved you ?"

"Because he sent me instruction, and made me feel the sin of my heart, and taught me to pray for pardon, and love his ways ; he sent you to teach me, sir, and to show me the way to be saved, and now I want to be saved in that way that he pleases. Sometimes I feel as if I loved all that he has said and done so much, that I wish never to think about any thing else. I know I did not use to feel so ; and I think if he had not loved me first, my wicked heart would never have cared about him. I once loved any thing better than religion, but now it is every thing to me."

"Do you believe, in your heart, that Christ is able and willing to save the chief of sinners ?"

"I do."

"And what are you ?"

"A young, but a great sinner."

"Is it not of his mercy that you know and feel yourself to be a sinner ?"

"Certainly ; yes, it must be so."

"Do you earnestly desire to forsake all sin ?"

"If I know myself, I do."

"Do you feel a spirit within you resisting sin, and making you hate it ?"

"Yes, I hope so."

"Who gave you that spirit? Were you always so?"

"It must be Christ, who loved me and gave himself for me. I was quite different once."

"Now then, my dear Jane, does not all this show a connection between the Lord Jesus Christ and your soul? Does it not seem as if you lived, and moved, and had a spiritual being from him? Just as the limb is connected with your body, and so with your head, and thereby gets power to live and move through the flowing of the blood from one to the other; so are you spiritually a limb or member of Christ, if you believe in him. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, sir, I believe I do; and it is very comfortable to my thoughts to look up to Christ as a living head, and to consider myself as the least and lowest of all his members."

"Now tell me what your thoughts are as to being a child of God?"

"I am sure, sir, I do not deserve to be called his child."

"Can you tell me who *does* deserve it?"

"No one, sir."

"How then comes any one to be a child of God, when by nature we all are children of wrath?"

"By God's grace, sir."

"What does grace mean?"

"Favor; free favor to sinners."

"Right; and what does God bestow upon the children of wrath, when he makes them children of grace?"

"A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness; is it not, sir?"

"Yes, this is the fruit of Christ's redeeming love; and I hope *you* are a partaker of the blessing. The family of God is named after him, and he is the first-born of many brethren. What a mercy that Christ calls himself '*a brother!*' My little girl, he is your brother; and will not be ashamed

to own you, and present you to his Father at the last day, as one that he has purchased with his blood."

"I wish I could love my Father and my Brother which are in heaven better than I do. Lord, be merciful to me a sinner: I think, sir, if I am a child of God, I am often a rebellious one. He shows kindness to me beyond others, and yet I make a very poor return.

'Are these thy favors day by day,
To me above the rest?
Then let me love thee more than they,
And strive to serve thee best?'"

"That will be the best way to approve yourself a real child of God. Show your love and thankfulness to such a Father, who hath prepared for you an inheritance among the saints in light, and made you an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, as well as a member of Christ, and a child of God. Do you know what *the kingdom of heaven* means?"

Just at that instant her mother entered the house below, and began to speak to a younger child in a passionate, scolding tone of voice, accompanied by some very offensive language: but quickly stopped, on hearing us in conversation up stairs.

"Ah, my poor mother!" said the girl, "you would not have stopped so short, if Mr. —— had not been here. Sir, you hear how my mother goes on; pray say something to her; she will not hear *me*."

I went towards the stair-head, and called to the woman; but she suddenly left the house, and for that time escaped reproof.

"Sir," said little Jane, "I am so afraid, if I go to heaven, I shall never see my poor mother there. As I lie here abed, sir, for hours together, there is often so much wickedness, and noise, and quarrelling down below, that I do not know

how to bear it. It comes very near, sir, when one's father and mother go on so. I want them all to turn to the Lord, and go to heaven. Tell me now, sir, something about being an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven."

"You may remember, my child, what I have told you, when explaining the Catechism in the church, that 'the kingdom of heaven' in the Scriptures, means the church of Christ upon earth as well as the state of glory in heaven. The one is a preparation for the other. All true Christians are 'heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ,' and shall inherit the glory and happiness of his kingdom, and live with Christ, and be with him for ever. This is the free gift of God to his adopted children; and all that believe aright in Christ shall experience the truth of that promise, 'It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.' You are a poor girl now, but I trust, 'an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' You suffer now; but are you not willing to suffer for his sake, and to bear patiently those things to which he calls you?"

"O, yes, very willing; I would not complain. It is all right."

"Then, my dear, you shall reign with him. Through much tribulation you may perhaps enter the kingdom of God; but tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope. As a true member of Christ, show yourself to be a dutiful child of God, and your portion will be that of an inheritor in the kingdom of heaven. Faithful is He that hath promised; commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass."

"Thank you, sir; I do so love to hear of these things. And I think, sir, I should not love them so much, if I had no part in them. Sir, there is one thing I want to ask you.

It is a great thing, and I may be wrong—I am so young—and yet I hope I mean right——"

Here she hesitated and paused.

"What is it? do not be fearful of mentioning it."

A tear rolled down her cheek—a slight blush colored her countenance. She lifted up her eyes to heaven for a moment, and fixing them on me, with a solemn, affecting look, said,

"May so young a poor child as I am be admitted to the Lord's Supper? I have for some time wished it, but dared not to mention it, for fear you should think it wrong."

"My dear Jane, I have no doubt respecting it,* and shall be very glad to converse with you on the subject, and hope that He who has given you the desire, will bless his own ordinance to your soul. Would you wish it now, or to-morrow?"

"To-morrow, if you please, sir—Will you come to-morrow and talk to me about it? and if you think it proper, I shall be thankful. I am growing faint now—I hope to be better when you come again."

I was much pleased with her proposal, and rejoiced in the prospect of seeing so young and sincere a Christian thus devote herself to the Lord, and receive the memorials of a Saviour's love to her soul.

Disease was making rapid inroads upon her constitution, and she was aware of it. But as the outward man decayed, she was strengthened with might by God's Spirit in the inner man. She was evidently ripening fast for a better world.

* It will be perceived, that this interesting and excellent Tract is from the pen of a devout Episcopalian; and in publishing this incident entire, it may be proper to say, that the Publishing Committee would not be understood to express any opinion in relation to the practice of administering the Lord's Supper in private.

I remember these things with affectionate pleasure. I hope the recollection does me good. I wish them to do good to thee, likewise, my reader; and therefore I write them down.

I was so much affected with my last visit to little Jane, and particularly with her tender anxiety respecting the Lord's Supper, that it formed the chief subject of my thoughts for the remainder of the day.

I rode in the afternoon to a favorite spot, where I sometimes indulged in solitary meditation; and where I wished to reflect on the interesting case of my little disciple.

The next morning I went to Jane's cottage. On entering the door, the woman who so frequently visited her met me, and said,

"Perhaps, sir, you will not wake her just yet; for she has dropped asleep, as she seldom gets much rest, poor girl."

I went gently up stairs. The child was in a half-sitting posture, leaning her head upon her right hand, with her Bible open before her. She had evidently fallen asleep while reading. Her countenance was beautifully composed and tranquil. A few tears had rolled down her cheek, and, probably unknown to her, dropped upon the pages of her book.

I looked around me for a moment. The room was outwardly comfortless and uninviting; the walls out of repair; the sloping roof somewhat shattered; the floor broken and uneven; no furniture but two tottering bedsteads, a three-legged stool, and an old oak chest—the window broken in many places, and mended with patches of paper. A little shelf against the wall, over the bedstead where Jane lay, served for her medicine, her food, and her books.

"Yet *here*," I said to myself, "lies an heir of glory

waiting for a happy dismissal. Her earthly home is poor indeed; but she has a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. She has little to attach her to this world; but what a weight of glory in the world to come! This mean, despised chamber, is a palace in the eye of faith, for it contains one that is an inheritor of a crown."

I approached without waking her, and observed that she had been reading the twenty-third chapter of St. Luke. The finger of her left hand lay upon the book, pointing to the words, as if she had been using it to guide her eye while she read. I looked at the place, and was pleased at the apparently casual circumstance of her finger pointing to these words: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."

"Is this casual, or designed?" thought I. "Either way it is remarkable." But in another moment I discovered that her finger was *indeed* an index to the thoughts of her heart. She *half* awoke from her dozing state, but not sufficiently so to perceive that any person was present, and said in a kind of a whisper,

"Lord, remember me—remember me—remember—remember a poor child—Lord, remember me——"

She then suddenly started, and perceived me, as she became fully awake: a faint blush overspread her cheeks for a moment, and then disappeared.

"Dame K——, how long have I been asleep? Sir, I am very sorry——"

"And I am very glad to find you thus," I replied: "you may say with David, 'I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me.' What were you reading?"

"The history of the crucifying of Jesus, sir."

"How far had you read when you fell asleep?"

"To the prayer of the thief that was crucified with him; and when I came to that place I stopped, and thought

what a mercy it would be, if the Lord Jesus should remember me likewise—and so I fell asleep, and I fancied in my dream that I saw Christ upon the cross; and I thought I said, 'Lord, remember me'—and I am sure he did not look angry upon me—and then I awoke."

All this seemed to be a sweet commentary on the text, and a most suitable forerunner of our intended sacramental service.

"Well, my dear child, I am come, as you wished me, to administer the memorials of the body and blood of our blessed Saviour to you; and I dare say neighbor K—— will be glad to join us."

"Talk to me a little about it first, sir, if you please."

"Well, you know this is an institution established by Christ himself. The Lord has ordained bread and wine in the holy Supper, as the outward mark which we behold with our eyes. It is a token of his love, grace, and blessing, which he promises to, and bestows on all who receive it, rightly believing on his name and work. He, in this manner, preserves among us a continual remembrance of his death, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.

"What do you believe respecting the death of Christ, Jane?"

"That because he died, sir, we live."

"What life do we live thereby?"

"The life of grace and mercy *now*, and the life of glory and happiness hereafter; is it not, sir?"

"Yes, assuredly: this is the fruit of the death of Christ; and thus he opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. As bread and wine strengthen and refresh your poor, weak, fainting body, in this very sickness; so does the blessing of his body and blood strengthen and refresh the souls of all those that repose their faith, hope, and affections on him who loved us and gave himself for us."

Tears ran down her cheeks as she said, "O, what a Saviour!—O, what a sinner!—How kind—how good! And is this for me?"

"Fear not, my child: He that has made you to love him thus, loves you too well to deny you. He will in no wise cast out any that come to him."

"Sir," said the girl, "I can never think about Jesus, and his love to sinners, without wondering how it can be. I deserve nothing but his anger on account of my sins: why then does he love me? My heart is evil: why then does he love me? I continually forget all his goodness: why then does he love me? I neither pray to him, nor thank him, nor do any thing, as I ought to do: why then such love to me?"

"How plain it is that all is mercy from first to last! and that sweetens the blessing, my child. Are you not willing to give Christ all the honor of your salvation, and to take all the blame of your sins on your own self?"

"Yes, indeed, sir, I am. My hymn says,

'Blest be the Lord, that sent his Son
To take our flesh and blood;
He for our lives gave up his own,
To make our peace with God.

He honored all his Father's laws,
Which we have disobeyed;
He bore our sins upon the cross,
And our full ransom paid.'"

"I am glad you remember your hymns so well, Jane."

"Sir, you don't know what pleasure they give me. I am very glad you gave me that little book of hymns for children."

A severe fit of coughing interrupted her speech for a while. The woman held her head. It was distressing

to observe her struggle for breath, and almost, as it were, for life.

"Poor dear!" said the woman, "I wish I could help thee, and ease thy pains; but they will not last for ever."

"God helps me," said the girl, recovering her breath, "God helps me; he will carry me through. Sir, you look frightened—I am not afraid—this is nothing—I am better now. Thank you, dame, thank you. I am very troublesome; but the Lord will bless you for this and all your kindness to me: yes, sir, and yours too. Now talk to me again about the Lord's Supper."

"What is required, Jane, of them who come to the Lord's Supper? There are five things named in the Catechism—do you remember what is the first?"

She paused; and then said with a solemn and intelligent look, "To examine themselves whether they repent truly of their former sins."

"I hope and think that you know what this means, Jane: the Lord has given you the spirit of repentance."

"No one knows, sir, what the thoughts of past sins have been to me. Yes, the Lord knows, and that is enough; and I hope he forgives me for Christ's sake. His blood cleanseth from all sin. Sir, I sometimes think of my sins till I tremble, and it makes me cry to think that I have offended such a God; and then he comforts me again with sweet thoughts about Christ."

"It is well, my child; be it so. The next thing mentioned in that answer of your Catechism, what is it?"

"Steadfastly purposing to lead a new life."

"And what do you think of that?"

"My life, sir, will be a short one; and I wish it had been a better one. But from my heart I desire that it may be a *new* one for the time to come. I want to forsake all my evil ways and thoughts, and evil words, and evil com-

panions; and to do what God bids me and what you tell me is right, sir, and what I read of in my Bible. But I am afraid I do not, my heart is so full of sin. However, sir, I pray to God to help me. My days will be few; but I wish they may be spent to the glory of God."

"The blessing of the Lord be upon you, Jane; so that, whether you live, you may live to the Lord; or whether you die, you may die unto the Lord; and that, living or dying, you may be the Lord's. What is the next thing mentioned?"

"To have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, sir."

"Do you believe that God is merciful to you in the pardon of your sins?"

"I do, sir," said the child, earnestly.

"And if he pardons you, is it for your own sake, Jane?"

"No, sir, no: it is for Christ's sake, for my Saviour Jesus Christ's sake, and that only—Christ is all."

"Can you trust him?"

"Sir, I must not mistrust him; nor would I if I might."

"Right, child; he is worthy of all your trust."

"And then, sir, I am to have a thankful remembrance of his death. I can never think of his dying, but I think also what a poor unworthy creature I am; and yet he is so good to me. I wish I *could* thank him. Sir, I have been reading about his death. How could the people do as they did to him? But it was all for our salvation. And then the thief on the cross—that is beautiful. I hope he will remember me too, and that I shall always remember him and his death most thankfully."

"And lastly, Jane, are you in charity with all men? Do you forgive all that have offended you? Do you bear ill-will in your heart to any body?"

"Dear sir, no! how can I? If God is so good to me, if he forgives me, how can I help forgiving others? There is not a person in all the world, I think, sir, to whom I do not wish well for Christ's sake, and that from the bottom of my heart."

"How do you feel in regard to those bold, wanton, ill-tempered girls at the next door, who jeer and mock you so about your religion?"

"Sir, the worst thing I wish them is, that God may give them grace to repent; that he may change their hearts, and pardon all their wicked ways and words. May he forgive them, as I do with all my soul!"

She ceased—I wished to ask no more. My heart was full. "Can this be the religion of a child?" thought I; "O, that we were all children like her!"

I then said, "My dear friends, I will now, with God's blessing, partake with you in the holy communion of our Lord's body and blood."

The time was sweet and solemn. I went through the sacramental service.

The countenance and manner of the child evinced powerful feelings. Tears mingled with smiles; resignation brightened by hope; humility animated by faith; childlike modesty adorned with the understanding of a riper age; gratitude, peace, devotion, patience—all these were visible.

When I had concluded the service, I said, "Now, my dear Jane, you are indeed a sister in the church of Christ. May his Spirit and blessing rest upon you—strengthen and refresh you!"

"My mercies are great, very great, sir, greater than I can express—I thank you for this favor—I thought I was too young—it seemed too much for me to think of; but I am now sure the Lord is good to me, and I hope I have done right."

"Yes, Jane; and I trust you are sealed by the Holy Ghost to the day of redemption."

"Sir, I shall never forget this day."

"Neither, I think, shall I."

"Nor I," said the good old woman; "sure the Lord has been here in the midst of us three to-day, while we have been gathered together in his name."

"Sir," said the child, "I wish you could speak to my mother when you come again. I am so grieved about her soul; and I am afraid she cares nothing at all about it herself."

"I hope I shall have an opportunity the next time I come. Farewell, my child."

"Good-by, sir, and I thank you for all your kindness to me."

"Surely," I thought within myself as I left the cottage, "this young bud of grace will bloom beauteously in paradise. The Lord transplant it thither in his own good time! Yet, if it be his will, may she live a little longer, that I may farther profit by her conversation and example."

Jane was hastening fast to her dissolution. She still, however, preserved sufficient strength to converse with much satisfaction to herself and those who visited her. Such as could truly estimate the value of her spiritual state of mind were but few; yet the most careless could not help being struck with her affectionate seriousness, her knowledge of the Scriptures, and her happy application of them to her own case. "The holy spark divine," which regenerating grace had implanted in her heart, brightened as she drew near the close of life, and kindled into a flame which warmed and animated the beholder. To *some*, I am persuaded, her example and conversation were made a blessing. Memory reflects with gratitude, while I write, on the profit

and consolation which I individually derived from her society. Nor I alone. The last day will, if I err not, disclose farther fruits, resulting from the love of God to this little child; and, through her, to others that saw her. And may not hope indulge the prospect, that this simple memorial of her history shall be as an arrow drawn from the quiver of the Almighty to reach the heart of the young and thoughtless? Direct its course, O my God! May the eye that reads, and the ear that hears, the record of little Jane, through the power of the Spirit of the Most High, each become a witness for the truth as it is in Jesus!

I remembered the tender solicitude of this dear child for her mother. I well knew what a contrast the dispositions and conduct of her parents exhibited, when compared with her own.

I resolved to avail myself of the first opportunity I could seize, to speak to the mother in the child's presence. One morning soon after the interview above related, I chose another path for my visit. The distance was not quite half a mile from my house. The path was retired. I hereby avoided the noise and interruption which even a village street will sometimes present to disturb the calmness of interesting meditation.

As I passed through the churchyard and cast my eye on the memorable epitaph, "Soon," I thought within me, "will my poor little Jane mingle her mouldering remains with this dust, and sleep with her fathers! Soon will the youthful tongue, which now lisps Hosannas to the Son of David, and delights my heart with the evidences of early piety and grace, be silent in the earth! Soon shall I be called to commit her body to the ground, 'earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.' But O, what a glorious change! Her spirit shall have then returned to God, who gave it. Her soul will be joining the hallelujahs of para-

dise, while we sing her requiem at the grave. And her very dust shall here wait, 'in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection from the dead.'"

I went through the fields without meeting a single individual. I enjoyed the retirement of my solitary walk; various surrounding objects contributed to excite useful meditation, connected with the great subjects of time and eternity. I was now arrived at the stile nearly adjoining her dwelling. The upper window was open, and I soon distinguished the sound of voices. I was glad to hear that of the mother. I entered the house door unperceived by those above stairs, and sat down below, not wishing as yet to interrupt a conversation which quickly caught my ear.

"Mother! mother! I have not long to live. My time will be very short. But I must, indeed I must, say something, for your sake, before I die. O mother! you have a soul—you have a soul, and what will become of it when you die? O my mother, I am so uneasy about your soul."

"O dear, I shall lose my child—she will die—and what shall I do when you are gone, my Jane?"—she sobbed aloud.

"Mother, think about your soul. Have not you neglected that?"

"Yes, I have been a wicked sinner, and not loved that which was good. What can I do?"

"Mother, you must pray to God to pardon you, for Christ's sake. You *must* pray."

"Jane, my child, I cannot pray; I never did pray in all my life. I am too wicked to pray."

"Mother, I have been wanting to speak to you a long time; but I was afraid to do it. You did not like me to say any thing about yourself, and I did not know how to begin. But indeed, mother, I must speak now, or it may be too late. I wish Mr. —— was here, for he could talk to you better

than I can. But perhaps you will think of what I say, poor as it is, when I am dead. I am but a young child, and not fit to speak about such things to any body. But, mother, you belong to me, and I cannot bear to think of your perishing for ever. My Lord and Saviour has shown me my own sins and corruptions; he loved me, and gave himself for me; he died, and he rose again—I want to praise him for it for ever and ever. I hope I shall see him in heaven; but I want to see you there too, mother. Do, pray do, both father and you, leave off swearing and all other bad ways; go to church and hear our minister speak about Jesus Christ, and what he has done for wicked sinners. He wishes well to souls. He taught me the way, and he will teach you, mother. Do not be angry with me, mother; I only speak for your good. I was once as careless as you are about the things of God. But I have seen my error. I was in the broad road leading to destruction, like many other children in the parish, and the Lord saw me, and had mercy upon me."

"Yes, my child, you was always a good girl, and minded your book."

"No, mother, no; not always. I cared nothing about goodness, nor my Bible, till the minister came and sent for us, as you know, on Saturday afternoons. Don't you remember, mother, that at first you did not like me to go, and said you would have no such *godly*, *pious* doings about *your* house; and that I had better play about the streets and fields, than to be laughed at and made game of for pretending to be so good. Ah, mother! you did not know what I went for, and what God designed for me and my poor sinful soul. But, thank God, I did go, and there learned the way of salvation. Mother, I wish you had learned it too."

As I listened to this affecting conversation, it appeared to me, from the tone and manner of the mother's voice, that

she was more under the influence of temporary grief, on account of her child's extreme illness, than sincere sorrow from any real sense of her sins. I however hoped the best, and rejoiced to hear such weighty and important exhortations dropping from her daughter's lips. I felt that present circumstances rendered it far more valuable than my own could have been.

I have often, since that time, seen the wicked and careless much affected while sitting by the dying bed of a near relative. I have witnessed their temporary acknowledgments of sin, and heard their professions of amendment. But, after a short season, all has passed away like the morning dew. The friend has been buried out of sight. The world and its cares, the flesh and its sins, have returned with new temptations, and the eloquence of iniquity has prevailed over the voice of truth.

On the other hand, how frequently have the death-beds of true believers been blessed to the eye-witnesses of the triumphs of grace over sin, death, and hell! Often has the careless bystander received the first saving impression of divine truth, while the dying Christian has experienced and testified the supports of love and mercy in the trying hour. At such seasons, faith wields a bright and burning torch, which occasionally softens the hardest, and warms the coldest heart. The expressions of that heavenly consolation and devout solicitude, which the Holy Spirit vouchsafes to some, thus become the happy means of grace and blessing for the conversion and edification of others.

At this moment the house door opened, and a younger child, a brother of Jane's, came in. The mother asked from above, who it was: the boy replied; and, without farther inquiry, she remained in the chamber. I beckoned to the lad to sit down quietly; and thus it still remained unknown that I was below.

"Mother," continued Jane, "that is my brother, and will soon be your only remaining child. Do, pray, encourage him to follow good ways; send him to Mr. ——, and he will be kind to him, as he has been to me. He is a wild boy, but I hope he will be brought to think about his soul in time. Those naughty, wicked boys teach him to swear and fight, and run after all manner of evil. Lord help him to flee from the wrath to come!"

I made a sign to the boy to listen to what his sister said concerning him. He seemed to hear with attention, and a tear dropped down his cheek.

"Ay, Jane, it is hoped he will, and that we all shall likewise."

"Mother, then you must flee to Christ. Nothing you can do will save you without that. You must repent and turn from sin—without the grace of God you will never do it; but seek, and you shall find it. Do, for your own sake, and for my sake, and my little brother's sake."

The woman wept and sobbed, without replying. I now thought it time to appear, went to the bottom of the stairs, and said, "May a friend come up?"

"Mercy on me!" said the mother, "there is Mr. ——."

"Come in, sir," said Jane, "I am very glad you are come *now*. Mother, set a chair."

The woman looked rather confused, Jane smiled as I entered, and welcomed me, as usual.

"I hope I shall be forgiven both by mother and daughter, for having remained so long below stairs, during the conversation which has just taken place. I came in the hope of finding you together, as I have had a wish for some time past to speak to you, Sarah, on the same subjects about which I am happy to say your daughter is so anxious. You have long neglected these things, and I wished to warn you of the danger of your state; but Jane has said all I

could desire, and I now solemnly ask you whether you are not much affected by your poor child's faithful conversation? You ought to have been her teacher, and instructor in the ways of righteousness; whereas now she is become *yours*. Happy, however, will it be for you, if you are wise and consider your latter end, and the things which belong to your peace, before they are hidden from your eyes! Look at your dying child, and think of your other and only remaining one, and say whether this sight does not call aloud upon you to hear and fear."

Jane's eyes were filled with tears while I spoke. The woman hung her head down, but betrayed some emotions of dislike at the plain dealing used towards her.

"My child, Jane," said I, "how are you to-day?"

"Sir, I have been talking a good deal, and feel rather faint and weary, but my mind has been very easy and happy since I last saw you. I am quite willing to die, when the Lord sees fit. I have no wish to live, except it be to see my friends in a better way before I depart. Sir, I used to be afraid to speak to them; but I feel to-day as if I could hold my peace no longer, and I must tell them what the Lord has done for my soul, and what I feel for theirs."

There was a firmness, I may say dignity, with which this was uttered, that surprised me. The character of the child seemed to be lost in that of the Christian: her natural timidity yielded to a holy assurance of manner, resulting from her own inward consolations, mingled with spiritual desire for her mother's welfare. This produced a flush upon her otherwise pallid countenance, which in no small degree added to her interesting appearance. The Bible lay open before her as she sat up in the bed. With her right hand she inclosed her mother's.

"Mother, this book *you* cannot read; you should therefore go constantly to church, that you may hear it explained.

It is God's book, and tells us the way to heaven ; I hope you will learn and mind it; with God's blessing it may save your soul. Do think of that, mother, pray do. I am soon going to die. Give this Bible to my brother; and will you be so kind, sir, as to instruct him ? Mother, remember what I say, and this gentleman is witness: there is no salvation for sinners like you and me, but in the blood of Christ ; he is able to save to the uttermost; he will save all that come to him; he waits to be gracious ; cast yourself upon his mercy. I wish—I wish—I—I——"

She was quite overcome, and sunk away in a kind of fainting fit.

Her mother observed that she would now probably remain insensible for some time, before she recovered.

I improved this interval in a serious address to the woman, and then prepared to take my departure, perceiving that Jane was too much exhausted for farther conversation at that time.

As I was leaving the room the child said faintly, "Come again soon, sir ; my time is very short."

I returned home by the same retired road which I had before chosen. I silently meditated on the eminent proofs of piety and faith which were just afforded me in the scene I had witnessed. Surely, I thought, this is an extraordinary child ! What cannot grace accomplish ? Is it possible to doubt, after this, *who* is alone the Author and Finisher of salvation ? or from *whom* cometh every good and perfect gift ? How rich and free is the mercy of Jehovah ! Hath not he "chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty ?" Let no flesh glory in his presence ; but he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

At a very early hour on the morning of the following day, I was awoke by the arrival of a messenger, bringing

an earnest request that I would immediately go to the child, as her end appeared to be just approaching. It was not yet day when I left my house to obey the summons. The morning star shone conspicuously clear. The moon cast a mild light over the prospect, but gradually diminished in brightness, as the eastern sky became enlightened. The birds were beginning their song, and seemed ready to welcome the sun's approach. My mind, as I proceeded, was deeply exercised by thoughts concerning the affecting events which I expected soon to witness. The rays of the morning star were not so beautiful in my sight as the spiritual lustre of this young Christian's character. Her night was far spent; the morning of a better day was at hand. When I arrived at the house, I found no one below; I paused a few minutes, and heard the girl's voice very faintly saying, "Do you think he will come? I should be so glad—so glad to see him before I die."

I ascended the stairs—her father, mother, and brother, together with the elderly woman before spoken of, were in the chamber. Jane's countenance bore the marks of speedy dissolution. Yet although death was manifest in the languid features, there was something more than ever interesting in the whole of her external aspect. The moment she saw me, a renewed vigor beamed in her eyes—grateful affection sparkled in the dying face.

Although she had spoken just before I entered, yet for some time afterwards she was silent, but never took her eyes off me. There was animation in her look—there was more—something like a foretaste of heaven seemed to be felt, and gave an inexpressible character of spiritual beauty even in death.

At length she said, "This is very kind, sir—I am going fast—I was afraid I should never see you again in this world."

I said, "My child, are you resigned to die?"

"Quite."

"Where is your hope?"

She lifted up her finger, pointing to heaven, and then directed the same downward to her own heart, saying successively as she did so, "Christ *there*, and Christ *here*."

These words, accompanied by the action, spoke her meaning more solemnly than can easily be conceived.

A momentary spasm took place. Looking towards her weeping mother, she said, "I am very cold, but it is no matter, it will soon be over."

She closed her eyes for about a minute, and on opening them again she said, "I wish, sir, when I am gone you would tell the other children of the parish how good the Lord has been to me, a poor sinner—tell them, that they who seek him early will find him—tell them, that the ways of sin and ignorance are the way to ruin and hell—and pray tell them, sir, from me, that Christ is indeed the way, the truth, and the life—he will in no wise cast out any that come. Tell them that I, a poor girl——"

She was quite exhausted, and sunk for a while into a torpid state, from which, however, she recovered gradually, uttering these expressions: "Where am I?—I thought I was going—Lord, save me."

"My dear child, you will soon be for ever in *his* arms, who is now guiding you by his rod and staff through the valley of the shadow of death."

"I believe so, indeed I do," said she; "I long to be with him!—O, how good, how great, how merciful!—Jesus, save me, help me through this last trial."

She then gave one hand to her father, the other to her mother, and said, "God bless you, God bless you—seek the Lord—think of me when I am gone—it may be for your good—remember your souls—O, for Christ's sake, remem-

ber your souls—then all may be well—you cannot know what I have felt for both of you—Lord, pardon and save my dear father and mother!"

She then took hold of her brother's hand, saying, "Thomas, I beg of you to leave off your bad ways—read the Bible—I give you mine—I have found it a precious book. Do you not remember our little brother, who died some years since?—he was praying to the last moment of his life. Learn to pray while you are in health, and you will find the comfort and power of it when you come to die; but first of all, pray for a new heart—without it you never will see God in heaven—your present way leads to misery and ruin—may the Lord turn your heart to love and follow him!"

To the other woman she said, "I thank you, Dame K——, for all your kindness since I have been ill—you have been a Christian friend to me, and I hope the Lord will remember you for it, according to his rich mercy. You and I have many a time talked together about death; and though I am the youngest, he calls me first to pass through it; but blessed be his name, I am not terrified. I once thought I never could die without fear; but indeed I feel quite happy now it is come; and so will you, if you trust him—he is the God both of the old and the young."

"Ah, my child!" said the woman, "I wish I was as fit to die as you are; but I fear that will never be—my sins have been many, very many."

"Christ's blood cleanseth from all sin," said the child.

At this moment, instead of growing weaker, through the fatigue of so much speaking, she seemed to gather fresh strength. She turned to me with a look of surprising earnestness and animation, saying,

"You, sir, have been my best friend on earth—you have taught me the way to heaven, and I love and thank you for

it—you have borne with my weakness and my ignorance—you have spoken to me of the love of Christ, and he has made me feel it in my heart—I shall see him face to face—he will never leave me nor forsake me—he is the same, and changes not. Dear sir, God bless you."

The child suddenly rose up, and with an unexpected exertion, threw her livid, wasted arms around me, as I sat on the bedside, laid her head on my shoulder, and said distinctly, "God bless and reward you—give thanks for me to him—my soul is saved—Christ is every thing to me. Sir, we shall meet in heaven, shall we not?—O yes, yes—then all will be peace—peace—peace——"

She sunk back on the bed, and spoke no more—fetched a deep sigh—smiled, and died.

At this affecting moment the first rays of the morning sun darted into the room, and seemed to describe the glorious change which her soul had now experienced.

For some time I remained silently gazing on the breathless corpse, and could hardly persuade myself that Jane was indeed no longer there.

As I returned homeward, I found it difficult to repress the strong feelings of affection which such a scene had excited. Neither did I wish it. Religion, reason, and experience rather bid us indulge, in due place and season, those tender emotions which keep the heart alive to its most valuable sensibilities. Jesus himself *wept* over the foreseen sorrows of Jerusalem. He *wept* also at the grave of his friend Lazarus. Such an example consecrates the tear of affection, while it teaches us, concerning them which are asleep, not to "sorrow, as those that have no hope."

I soon fell into meditation on the mysterious subject of the flight of a soul from this world to that of departed spirits. "Swifter than the rays of light from the sun, has this child's spirit hastened, in obedience to its summons from God, to

appear in his immediate presence. How solemn a truth is this! But, washed in the blood of the Lamb that was slain, and happily made partaker of its purifying efficacy, she meets her welcome at the throne of God. Sin, death, and hell are vanquished, through the power of Him who hath made her more than conqueror. He will himself present her to his Father, as one of the purchased lambs of his flock —as one whom the Spirit of God 'has sealed unto the day of redemption.'

"What a change for her! from that poor, tattered chamber, to the regions of paradise! from a bed of straw to the bosom of Abraham! from poverty, sickness, and pain, to eternal riches, health, and joy! from the condition of a decayed, weary pilgrim, in this valley of tears, to that of a happy traveller, safely arrived at home, in the rest that remaineth to the people of God!

"I have lost a young disciple, endeared to me by a truly parental tie. Yet how can I complain of that as lost, which God has found? Her willing and welcome voice no longer seeks or imparts instruction here. But it is far better employed. The angels who rejoiced over her when her soul first turned to God, who watched the progress of her short pilgrimage, and who have now carried her triumphantly to the heavenly hills, have already taught her to join

'In holy song, their own immortal strains.'

Why then should I mourn? The whole prospect, as it concerns her, is filled with joy and immortality: 'Death is swallowed up in victory.'"

On the fourth day from thence, Jane was buried. I had never before committed a parishioner to the ground with similar affections. The attendants were not many, but I was glad to perceive among them some of the children who had been accustomed to receive my weekly private instruc-

tion along with her. I wished that the scene might usefully impress their young hearts, and that God would bless it to their edification. As I stood at the head of the grave during the service, I connected past events, which had occurred in the churchyard, with the present. In this spot Jane first learned the value of that Gospel which saved her soul. Not many yards from her own burial-place was the epitaph which has already been described as the first means of affecting her mind with serious and solemn conviction. It seemed to stand, at *this* moment, as a peculiar witness for those truths which its lines proclaimed to every passing reader. Such an association of objects produced a powerful effect on my thoughts.

The evening was serene—nothing occurred to interrupt the quiet solemnity of the occasion. "Peace" was the last word little Jane uttered, while living; and peace seemed to be inscribed on the farewell scene at the grave, where she was laid. A grateful remembrance of that peace revives in my own mind, as I write these memorials of it; and O, may that peace which passeth all understanding be in its most perfect exercise, when I shall meet her again at the last day.

Attachment to the spot where this young Christian lay, induced me to plant a yew-tree close by the head of her grave, adjoining the eastern wall of the church. I designed it as an evergreen monument of one who was dear to memory. The young plant appeared healthy for a while, and promised by its outward vigor long to retain its station. But it withered soon afterwards, and, like the child whose grave it pointed out to notice, early faded away and died. The yew-tree proved a frail and short-lived monument. But a more lasting one dwells in my own heart. And possibly this narrative may be permitted to transmit her memory to other generations, when the hand and heart of the writer shall be cold in the dust.

Perchance some, into whose hands these pages may fall, will be led to cultivate their spiritual young plants with increased hope of success in so arduous an endeavor. May the tender blossoms reward their care, and bring forth early and acceptable fruit!

Some, who have perhaps been accustomed to undervalue the character of *very* youthful religion, may hereby see that the Lord of grace and glory is not limited in the exercise of his power by age or circumstance. It sometimes appears in the displays of God's love to sinners, as it does in the manifestation of his works in the heavens, that the *least* of the planets moves in the nearest course to the sun, and there enjoys the most powerful influence of his light, heat, and attraction.

The story of this Young Cottager involves a clear evidence of the freeness of the operations of divine grace on the heart of man; of the inseparable connection between true faith, and holiness of disposition; and of the simplicity of character which a real love of Christ transfuses into the soul.

How many of the household of faith, in every age,

"Alike unknown to fortune and to fame,"

have journeyed and are now travelling to their "city of habitation," through the paths of modest obscurity, and almost unheeded piety! It is one of the most interesting employments of the Christian minister to search out these lilies of the valley, whose beauty and fragrance are nearly concealed in their shady retreats. To rear the flower, to assist in unfolding its excellences, and bring forth its fruit in due season, is a work that delightfully recompenses the toil of the cultivator.

While he is occupied in this grateful task of laboring in his heavenly Master's garden, some blight, some tempest

may chance to take away a favorite young blossom, in a premature stage of its growth.

If such a case should befall him, he will then, perhaps, as I have often done, when standing in pensive recollection at little Jane's grave, make an application of these lines, which are inscribed on a gravestone erected in the same churchyard, and say,

"This lovely bud, so young and fair,
Called hence by early doom,
Just came to show how sweet a flower
In Paradise would bloom."

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THE

DANGER OF DELAY.

Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.—2 Cor. 6: 2.

Various are the artifices which the great adversary of the souls of men employs for accomplishing their ruin. When he is no longer able to exclude the light of divine truth from the understanding, or to divert the attention from the things that belong to their peace, or to prevent entirely the general resolution of complying with the design of the Gospel, he next labors to persuade them to postpone the immediate execution of a purpose, enforced not only by the sacred obligations of duty, but also by a just regard to their present and everlasting welfare. Thus no direct opposition is made to the convictions of the mind. The sinner, though but partially awakened, would, in the circumstances now supposed, revolt at the idea of a decided rejection of the proposals of divine mercy. But no more is pleaded for than a temporary indulgence, a short delay perhaps, which, it is presumed, can be attended with no great degree of inconvenience or danger. Thus the conscience is lulled asleep; and, to the delaying sinner, the consequences of this temptation may in the end prove no less fatal than an immediate and contemptuous disregard of the Gospel of salvation.

Few men are so hardened as to resolve that they will never repent and believe the Gospel. The young man, fondly anticipating many years to come, and supposing that it will be time enough hereafter to provide for the salvation of his soul, resolves, in the meantime, not to decline the pleasures that lie within his reach, nor to withhold his heart from any joy. Those in more advanced life have no time,

amidst the multiplicity of their engagements, to attend to so serious a business as religion; but they resolve that when they have more leisure they will begin to think of a future life. And even old age itself is often ingenious in discovering pretexts for putting off a little longer the work of preparation for the eternal world.

Should Providence direct this Tract into the hands of one who may be under the influence of this common and dangerous temptation, he is earnestly requested to attend to the few following considerations, as in the sight of God, and in view of the account which he must ere long render to his Judge.

Consider *the importance and urgency* of the business to which your attention is now invited. The Gospel contains a message from the God of heaven to every soul that hears it. "This is his commandment, that we believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ." 1 John, 3: 23. "God now commandeth all men every where to repent." Acts 17: 30. And Jesus himself, while he abode on earth, preached, saying, "Repent ye, and believe the Gospel." Mark 1: 15. No indulgence is granted to men either to decline or to postpone compliance with this divine injunction. The obligation which it infers, is in the highest degree important and peremptory.

But this command is not less gracious than it is authoritative. Its great object is connected at once with the safety and welfare of those to whom it is addressed. It proposes deliverance from the greatest evils, and holds out advantages invaluable and everlasting. In all the great concerns of life, delay is ever understood as indicating a mind feeble and unwise; but in the present case it must appear unreasonable and absurd, in a degree far beyond what is to be found in any other example of human folly. By delay, no advantage whatever can be gained; but, on the contrary, the important interests at issue may be lost for ever.

Nor must it be forgotten that the folly of delay can be equalled only by its guilt. It at once opposes the authority of the majesty of heaven, and tramples under foot the richest provisions of divine mercy. Why, then, delay to fulfil an obligation so commanding, and to attend to an interest so incalculable? Why persist in offending the great God, and in hazarding your own salvation?

Consider *the suitableness and value* of the blessings proposed to our acceptance in the Gospel. These are precisely adapted to the condition of the sinner, and include the most ample provision for present comfort and eternal happiness. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." 1 Tim. 4: 8. There is nothing to hinder your immediate access to these exceeding great and precious promises, and to the enjoyment, so far as the present state admits, of all the good which they contain. "Come unto me," saith Jesus, "all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11: 28. And "we," saith the apostle, "who have believed, do enter into rest." When this rest is, by the divine promise, placed, as it were, within your reach, why delay to accept of it? Would the wise merchantman who has found a pearl of great price, delay to enrich himself by the purchase? Would the young heir, who had just succeeded to a fair and ample inheritance, unnecessarily delay to enter on the possession? Would the sick man, laboring under a painful and alarming disease, delay to take that medicine by which he might be speedily restored to perfect health? Or would the criminal condemned to die, delay accepting the offer of pardon held out to him by the clemency of his prince?

And is it too soon, O sinful man, who art condemned already, and every moment exposed to the wrath of an Almighty Judge, is it too soon to flee from the wrath to come, and betake thyself to the stronghold opened to the

prisoners of hope? Is it too soon to be released from the burden and terror of guilt, and to rise to confidence and peace with God? Is it too soon to be restored to his friendship, and to walk in daily fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ? Is it too soon to be cleansed from the pollution of sin, and to be raised to the honor of holy conformity and devotedness to God? Is it too soon to turn from the low satisfactions, from the vain and transient enjoyments of the world, to those purer and nobler joys which Christ gives to those who come to him, and which will be in them a well of water springing up to everlasting life? Is it too soon to obtain from the Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even the Father, that everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, which will not only comfort the believing heart under the unavoidable burdens of life, the disappointments, vexations, and tribulations of the present evil world, but teach him to look forward to death, not only without dismay, but even with desire and joy, and to triumph in the well-grounded prospect of a blessed immortality? Are these the blessings which the Son of God has purchased by his blood, and which he freely tenders to men without money and without price? Are these the blessings which it is necessary for his ministers to urge with continued importunity on your acceptance? And are these the blessings which delaying sinners are willing, at least for a season, to forego, that they may, in the meantime, live without God, without Christ, without peace, and without hope in the world?

Consider that the present favorable opportunities of securing salvation, if neglected, *may pass away, never to return.* Besides the general privilege of access to the Scriptures and to the preaching of the Gospel, many persons are favored with special advantages for leading them to the knowledge of the truth, and to a compliance with its design. Particular dispensations of Providence sometimes concur with the word,

and impress its truths on the minds of men. There are, it may be presumed, but few who have not occasion to recollect certain seasons and circumstances in life, in which the attention has been awakened, the heart softened, desires excited, purposes formed, and a state of mind produced not far from the kingdom of God. But if these opportunities are not immediately improved, it must not be expected that they will be always enjoyed. Your pious parents, who longed, and labored, and prayed for your eternal welfare, may soon be laid in the dust; the faithful friend, whose warnings and persuasions have often been ineffectually employed, may be taken away; or, at last, considering your case as hopeless, he may cease to counsel or reprove. You may be led to exchange a lively and awakening ministry for one more adapted to foster security. Connections may be formed which will leave little leisure for serious consideration, and may present hindrances and opposition which the corruption of nature will be more disposed to yield to than resist. Unavoidable circumstances or voluntary engagements may occasion some to remove to a distant part of the world where no Bible will be found, no Gospel preached, no ordinances dispensed; and where all the concerns of business and society will tend to extinguish convictions, and to harden the heart through the deceitfulness of sin.

And let it be particularly remarked, that to each individual some day, some occasion of hearing the doctrine of salvation, proves *the last* that shall ever be enjoyed—an eventful opportunity which concludes the whole period of divine forbearance, the long-continued series of gracious applications to the soul. The statement is not imaginary. It has often been realized, and continues to be realized in the case of multitudes from day to day. While Paul was confined a prisoner at Cesarea, the Roman governor, had he been so inclined, might often have heard the Gospel from

his lips; and one such opportunity he certainly had. And as the apostle "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come, Felix trembled." Acts 24: 25. No subjects could have been more suited to his circumstances and character. His attention was arrested. His heart was impressed. His conscience was roused. He trembled under the apostle's discourse. Happy moment had Felix yielded to his convictions; and with a resolution to follow the advice, besought the preacher to inform him what he must do to be saved! He would not have made this application in vain. But he thought only of getting rid of his uneasy sensations. "Go thy way," he said, "for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." Acts 24: 25. This was his *last opportunity*, and it passed, never to return. He afterwards sent for the apostle, hoping to receive money, but not to hear of the faith of Christ; and we hear no more of him in any connection with the means of grace or the hopes of glory.

The following passage in the life of Thomas Lord Lyttleton,* is related nearly in his own words: "I have had some serious conversations with my father; and one evening he concluded by recommending me to address heaven to have mercy upon me, and to join my own prayers to his constant and paternal ones for my reformation. These expressions, with his preceding counsels, and affecting delivery of them, had such an effect upon me that I had bent the stubborn sinews of my knees, when it occurred to me that my devotions might be seen through the key-hole. This drew me from my pious attitude; and having secured this aperture, I thought it would not be a useless precaution to let down the window-curtains also; and during the performance of that ceremony, some lively music which struck up in the street caught my attention, and gave a sudden flirt to

* Son of George Lord Lyttleton, who wrote the celebrated treatise on the conversion and apostleship of St. Paul.

all my devout ideas; so I girded on my sword and went to the theatre, where the entertainments soon put me out of humor with praying, and into humor with myself."

Reader, it may be that thine eyes have looked for the last time on the sacred volume which contains the record of eternal life. It may be that thine ears have heard, for the last time, the joyful sound which brings the message of reconciliation and peace. It may be that the plain considerations to which thou art now attending, convey the last expostulation that shall ever be offered to thy conscience. It may be that the feelings of penitence and anxiety are for the last time rising in thy heart. Dost thou say with Felix, Go thy way till I have a convenient season? May not the awful sentence be coming forth from heaven, "My Spirit shall strive no longer. He is joined to his idols, let him alone. Leave him to a self-righteous confidence, to a delusive peace, to a hope that shall perish." When our Lord drew nigh, for the last time, to the city of Jerusalem, that infatuated and devoted city, "he wept over it, and said, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." Luke 19: 42.

Consider that *the difficulties of repentance will not be diminished, but, on the contrary, increased by delay.* A moral and spiritual change, described by our Lord as a new and heavenly birth, must necessarily pass on the heart of every man before he can be qualified for the blessedness of heaven. A divine agency is necessary to produce it; and therefore its accomplishment must, in every person and in every circumstance, be equally easy to Almighty power. But the Holy Ghost operates in a manner suited to our nature as rational though fallen creatures. His grace is intended not to supersede the exercise of our faculties, but to direct and dispose the sinner to comply with the gracious demands of the Gospel. While the Holy Spirit enlightens

the understanding, convinces the judgment, and persuades the will, it is the duty and business of the sinner to receive the record of eternal life, and turn to God. But it ought to be remembered that this heavenly influence is neither calculated nor intended to prevent the soul from sensibly experiencing the difficulties that may be expected to attend so complete a change of moral dispositions and conduct. And these difficulties, it is evident, must be greatly augmented by delay. How difficult and painful must it be to relinquish habits that have now become inveterate; to subdue sinful propensities confirmed by long indulgence; to make all those sacrifices of worldly attachments and connections, interests and pleasures, that Christian duty may demand; and, in short, to pursue a spiritual and holy course of life, altogether opposite to the strongest inclinations of unrenewed nature! "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Jer. 13 : 23.

And if it be proposed to defer repentance till the conclusion of life draws near, must not the difficulties of a work, arduous even in the most favorable circumstances, be then increased to an extreme degree? When, as the course of nature warrants us to expect, the body is enfeebled, and the faculties impaired by age; when every thought is occupied in seeking relief from the pressure of infirmity and pain; and when the mind is agitated by all the anxieties which the approaches of dissolution must excite; is this the season thou hast chosen, imprudent man, for beginning thy acquaintance with God, and preparing for judgment and eternity? Can any thing less than insanity dictate such a choice? And can it be seriously adopted by any man who professes to admit the duty and entertain the purpose of ever returning to God?

The delaying sinner forgets his absolute *dependence* on the sovereign mercy and grace of God. The blessings of

salvation are in the Gospel freely held forth to sinners ; but God is under no obligation to impart them to any individual, far less to keep them in reserve till the sinner finds himself disposed to seek them. God, indeed, is rich in mercy, and is "long-suffering to us ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter, 3 : 9. It is not for us to prescribe to God, or to limit the extent of his mercy. He certainly may, and sometimes does raise up, even from among sinners distinguished by their hardness of heart and long-continued guilt, signal monuments of his sovereign mercy and superabounding grace. But the question is not what God *may do ;* of that he himself is best judge ; and "shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" But the question is, What may sinners warrantably expect, according to the declarations of his word and the unchangeable principles of his government? Now, while the Scriptures contain the most gracious invitations and promises, to engage perishing sinners to receive the grace that brings salvation, not the least encouragement is given to justify delay. On the contrary, hesitation and delay are represented as highly criminal and provoking to God, and calculated to draw down the visitation of his wrath. "Again," as the apostle states the fact, "he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To-day, after so long a time ; as it is said, To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." "Behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. 6 : 2.

Canst thou then expect, O misjudging man, who art postponing till hereafter, attention to thy eternal interests, canst thou expect that after giving the best of thy days to sin and the world, and long insulting the Majesty of heaven by despising the riches of his grace, the great God will be more ready than at present to extend to thee his saving mercy? Canst thou expect that the blessed Jesus, whose voice thou hast so long refused to hear, and whose precious

blood thou hast so long trodden under foot, will then be more disposed than at present to undertake thy cause, and become thy intercessor with the Father? Canst thou expect that the Holy Spirit, grieved and vexed with thy delay, will then be more disposed to exert his saving energy, and fulfil in thy heart all the good pleasure of his goodness? Or, rather, is there not just cause to fear that he may be provoked to deal with the delaying sinner as with Israel of old, who tempted him and provoked him, and saw his works in the wilderness; and of whom he said, "Forty years long was I grieved with this generation; it is a people that do err in their hearts, and they have not known my ways: unto whom I sware in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest?" Psalm 95: 9–11.

Consider *the great uncertainty of life*. It has all along been supposed that the delaying sinner *may* live till the period arrives which he has fixed for attending to the salvation of his soul. But the folly and danger of trusting to this supposition are surely very great. What can be more uncertain than human life? What is it but "a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away?" Men do not leave the world in the order of time in which they enter it. Few only are permitted to arrive at old age; and multitudes fall at every other period of life. Where are now the companions of thy youth, the friends of thy riper years, and a numerous society with whom, in various ways, thou hast been connected in life? They have disappeared from the earth, and now exist in the world of spirits. Among these, how many have been cut down in the morning or noon-day of life? To not a few, probably, the summons has been short; and some have been called unexpectedly, in a moment perhaps, to pass to the eternal state. "In the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth." Numerous cases

of this sort have been furnished by the last and by every preceding year; and to these, numerous additions will no doubt be made by the next, and by every following year. In these circumstances, how unwise, beyond expression, must it be to delay the great concerns of immortality from day to day, and from one year to another. "Behold, the Judge standeth at the door. In such an hour as ye think not, and in a moment that ye are not aware," the summons may be given and thy soul required. "Escape, then, for thy life," O delaying sinner! "look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountains, lest thou be consumed." Gen. 19: 7.

Consider *the recollections which, it may be expected, will, in the eternal world, be the portion of the sinner who has perished by delay.* "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment." "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be." And now the period has arrived when the offers of mercy are brought to a final close, and are succeeded by an awful and eternal judgment. Think of the state of the sinner who, having dismissed his convictions, never found the "convenient season," when he proposed to attend to them again. His body tormented in the flame; his mind torn with feelings inexpressible; doomed, in the infernal prison, to associate with satanic fiends and all the tribes of ungodly men, outcast from the mansions of bliss! "And is this the place in which I am destined to dwell for ever! How often in my lifetime was I apprised of its horrors, and warned to flee from the wrath to come! But I despised the counsels of the God of mercy, and continued to trifle with his gracious warnings, till my feet stumbled on the dark mountains, and I sunk into these abodes of woe."

Nor will it afford the least comfort to dart a look across the impassable gulf, and perceive the kingdom of heavenly

glory shining from afar; the great multitude which no man can number, arrayed in white robes, with palms of victory in their hands, and crowns of gold upon their heads, in the glorious presence of God and of the Lamb! "How often was I invited to join that illustrious society, and to share in all their blessedness and glory! But I hesitated and delayed, and would not know the day of my visitation. And now my condemnation is just, my anguish intolerable, and my punishment everlasting!"

Hasten, O sinner, *to be wise*,
And stay not for the morrow's sun:
The longer wisdom you despise,
The harder is she to be won.

O hasten, mercy *to implore*,
And stay not for the morrow's sun;
For fear thy season should be o'er
Before this evening's stage be run.

O hasten, sinner, *to return*,
And stay not for the morrow's sun;
For fear thy lamp should fail to burn
Before the needful work is done.

O hasten, sinner, *to be blest*,
And stay not for the morrow's sun;
For fear the curse should thee arrest
Before the morrow is begun.

O Lord, do thou the sinner turn!
Now rouse him from his senseless state!
O let him not thy counsel spurn,
Nor mourn his fatal choice too late!

THE

SEAMAN'S SPY-GLASS.

BY A CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND,

FORMERLY A LIEUTENANT IN THE ROYAL NAVY.

When we behold a vessel launched, for the first time, into the water, we know not what its future history may be. All we are sure of is, that it will have to beat about at sea, to contend with storms and calms, to be endangered by currents and rocks and sands, to be in frequent peril from the breaking sea, the forked lightning, and the ignorance and ill-management of the crew.

But how long it may float amidst these dangers and vicissitudes of evil we know not; neither are we acquainted by what event, or in what part of the world, it may be brought to its end. It may founder soon after it leaves port; it may be set on fire, and consumed in the midst of the waters; it may be torn, as it were, plank from plank, by its laboring and plunging in a heavy and continued hurricane; or it may be suddenly dashed to pieces on some sunken rock, even while the sky is clear and the wind directly fair. By some such means it may be brought to its end. Or it may escape all these perils, and, after weathering many storms and visiting many distant parts of the world, it may return in peace, and in its own port end its days, full of credit, and followed with many a long and kind remembrance by those who had sailed on board.

So when the children of men are born into this world, and launched on the unsettled ocean of life, we know not what their future history may be. All we are sure of is, that "they are born to trouble as the sparks fly upward;" that, if they are permitted to continue the voyage of life for any length of time, they will have to contend with ten thousand dangers, as well from the flesh as the world and satan. They may go down to the grave soon after they are launched into life; or they may proceed awhile on their voyage, and then be destroyed by the flames of youthful lusts which war against the soul. Surrounded by the fair winds and cheering skies of a gracious Providence, they may run on, thoughtless of futurity, inattentive to the advice of friends, and perfectly indifferent to the admonitions of God's word. Hence, they may become covetous, idolaters, ambitious tyrants, or haughty and presumptuous infidels. The gales of human approbation and the love of

money may so inflate their souls, that, like an overpressed vessel, they may be upset and perish. The swelling waves of adversity may break repeatedly over them, and they may sink in despondency and despair. Or, escaping all these evils, they may pass through a long and useful life, honoring God by works of faith, and benefiting mankind by labors of love; and having walked watchfully and humbly before the Lord, and through his grace surmounted all dangers, they may close their days in a good old age, in the bosoms of their own families, and depart in peace, to be for ever with their gracious Lord and Saviour in heaven;

"Where, anchor'd safe, each weary soul
Obtains a port of rest;
Where storms ne'er beat, nor billows roll
Across the peaceful breast."

NAVIGATING THE SHIP.

In vain would it be to fit out the finest ship in the best and most expensive manner; in vain to put the most valuable cargo on board, and to send her to sea in the fairest season, and under the most flattering circumstances: in vain, I say, would be all this care and expense, and all these advantages, if, when she got into deep water, the log, and compass, and quadrant, were to be neglected. She might float a few leagues, indeed, but as to circumnavigating the globe, and returning safe and enriched at last, there would be no hope of such results; on the contrary, the ship, and men, and cargo, would sooner or later be lost. Of this seamen are so confident, that they would not sail on board a vessel whose officers were likely to act so mad a part. Hence, at sea there is great care taken to keep the log

going, to steer by the compass, to consult the chart, to obtain soundings, and get observations of the sun and other heavenly bodies, by the quadrant, as often as possible. Every careful navigator sees to all these things, and settles his reckoning, and endeavors to find the bearings and distance of the nearest land, and of his intended port, at least once in every four and twenty hours.

So with respect to man. In vain are all his best natural faculties of mind, his valuable helps of education, his fair and smiling prospects in the world; these will avail nothing towards conducting him safe and happy across this dangerous sea of life to a heavenly kingdom, unless they are brought into constant and suitable use. Nor can all the natural and worldly advantages that ever distinguished man, conduct his soul to heaven, without the grace of God attending, and blessing, and sanctifying all his natural gifts. This being the case, it becomes necessary for the most rich and learned, as well as for the poor and illiterate, to use every means of grace in their power: to hear the word of God, to pray, to meditate, to watch their steps, to bridle their tongue, to suppress their anger, to regulate their whole course by the compass of Scripture. Without this they may indeed, for a season, *appear* to go on as well as others, and, for a time, even to prosper; but shortly they will strike on some fatal rock, or founder in the whirlpools of ignorance, infidelity, or presumption. This the thoughtful Christian knows, and therefore he consults his Bible as the chart which is to point out his various dangers across this perilous and intricate ocean. From time to time, by self-examination, he fathoms his own heart, and compares its soundings with those laid down in the map of God's word. He looks forward, and calculates on approaching dangers and temp-

tations, and then directs his eyes to heaven, to Jesus Christ the Sun of righteousness, for wisdom and grace to avoid them.

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF WIND AND TIDE.

Every seaman knows how absolutely necessary it is, that those who have the conducting of boats or ships should understand and take advantage of wind and tide, while they are in their favor; because experience and common sense have taught them that "wind and tide stay for no man." Hence, they see the wisdom of catching a fair breeze when they can, and of making the most of it while it continues. When they are at sea, they also put the same wise principles into action: they watch every shift of wind, and brace up or square the yards accordingly; at one time hauling the bowlines, and at another slacking off the sheets; at one time sailing on the starboard tack, and at another on the larboard, as may best suit to the varying element they have to contend with. Hence it is, that with the same wind, by skilful and proper management, twenty different vessels may at the same time be sailing on twenty different points of the compass. It is by this watchfulness and skill, accompanied with the blessing of Divine Providence, that so many ships pass in all directions on the bosom of the great deep to their various destinations. If, however, men go on board a ship, who are too ignorant, or too idle, to take advantage of flowing tides, and fair and leading winds, it is no marvel if they lie wind-bound in a foreign country, or perish at sea; while their more skilful and persevering neighbors return home in safety and peace.

So it is in spiritual things. "There are seasons and fair gales of grace, golden opportunities of salvation afforded to

men, the neglect of which proves the loss and ruin of souls. Of what immense importance, then, it is, that we should watch, and study, and take all advantage of these favorable visitations, these leading opportunities of grace. How necessary to trim every sail, every faculty of the soul, to all the various gracious providences of God; that we occupy with every intrusted talent, and sail with every favorable gale, until, through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, we have run our distance, finished our voyage, and received our crown."

THE FAIR-WEATHER AND FRESH-WATER SAILORS.

On board of large ships there are all sorts of characters, and not a few who are called "fair-weather sailors." These, so long as all is fine and smooth on deck, can talk much, and boast and swagger of their knowledge and readiness to do great things. But when the sea gets up, when the gale comes on in earnest, and the ship is in some danger, these boasting talkers are often found to be good for nothing. They have neither knowledge to perform their duty, nor courage to go through with it.

There are, also, in every seaport town, many fresh-water sailors, or young fellows, who, on a fine day, put on a gay jacket and pair of trowsers, and pull or sail about in a boat up and down the rivers, or at some harbor's mouth; on these occasions they curse and swear, and think themselves braver men than Nelson himself. And what still makes this folly and wickedness the greater, is, that it is frequently on the Lord's day, that holy Sabbath, when they ought to be worshipping God, instead of taking their childish pleasure on the water. But do the fine jackets and

trowsers which these men put on, or the oaths they swear, or the swaggering language they use, make really brave men? No; for if the sky becomes cloudy, or a breeze freshens up, these counterfeit mariners soon hasten to the nearest land, and run with all their might from the vulgar gale and unpleasant breaking waves, preferring a snug house and comfortable fireside, where they can sit and talk brave language, and admire their unspotted sea-dress; leaving it to others to face the storm in deep water. In one word, it is not a man's appearance, nor his language, that proves his real character. A stormy day, and real danger, are things that no true seaman ever wishes to meet for the sake of showing his skill and bravery; but they are the things that actually prove who are brave and skilful seamen, and who are only fair-weather and fresh-water sailors.

So, in the Christian world, and in every society of professed Christians, whether by land, or by sea, there are a variety of characters who much resemble those above described. There are fresh-water, or rather counterfeit Christians, or, if you please, imitators and impostors, who put on the profession of religion, and sail down the stream, indulging their own pleasure, and exhibiting their proud, tawdry dress, and their dear idolized persons; and while they are thus mocking God, they often persuade themselves they are great characters. These, however, are never found to bear reproach for Christ, nor to deny themselves one darling lust or pleasure. And if at any time their profession of religion threatens to bring such a trial, they quickly turn to the world, and leave vulgar Christians to encounter envy, hatred, malice, and reproach, for following that Saviour, who, with his disciples of old, was despised and rejected of men, and who is found to receive the same

treatment from the lovers of pleasure in our own times. Others proceed a little further; they embark in the cause of Christ, go with his real servants, and are often, like the fair-weather sailors, found to talk with more confidence and freedom than old and experienced Christians. Yet these, with all their self-confidence and showy profession, are frequently found to flinch in times of trial, and in seasons of difficulty and danger to betray great ignorance, and great cowardice.

As no real seaman makes light of past dangers, nor wishes to meet future ones, to display his courage, so no real Christian makes light of past temptations, or ever expresses his wish to encounter future ones. On the contrary, if it were possible, the wisest and bravest seamen would wish to pass through life without being exposed to one more storm; and the wisest and best Christians would desire to go on to the end of their pilgrimage, without having to encounter one more temptation. But as this is not the will of God, they learn, as often as the season of trial comes, to look to him who alone can give them strength, and wisdom, and courage; and when he has brought them through the difficulty, their language is, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name be all the praise."

> "I have no skill the snare to shun,
> But thou, O Christ, my wisdom art;
> I ever into danger run!
> But thou art greater than my heart."

As to vain talkers, the fair-weather and fresh-water Christians, they are more to be pitied than despised. If the grace of God has made us to differ from them, let us not forget that it is only the grace of God which has made the difference. And for them let our prayer be offered up.

THE STORM.

No man has long been at sea without experiencing what the landsman calls tempests and storms. And those who have navigated foreign seas, and been accustomed to distant voyages, have often witnessed what no mere resident on shore can form any adequate idea of; the gathering darkness and wild confusion of a tempest-driven sky, torn asunder only to make way for fresh discharges of lightning and stronger howlings of the wind; the thunder rolling through the vault of heaven, and shaking the trembling masts down to the very keels of the laboring vessel. The mountain-waves, piling on each other, rushing forward, and sounding the very knell of death as they break, and half bury the restless bark in their dreary foam. The sails blowing from the yards, the yards themselves gone in the slings; the masts perhaps plunging over the side, and carrying part of the hapless crew with them into the merciless deep. The groaning wreck rolling ungovernable in the trough of the sea; the leaks increasing and gaining on the crew, the chain pumps sending forth their dismal clanking sound; and above all, a frightful lee-shore stretching itself within view, and every hour becoming more and more distinct, frowning only death on all who approach it.

These are scenes on which poets have often written, and orators have harangued their audience; but they are scenes which neither poets nor orators can describe as they really appear to those that themselves "go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters." These men do indeed "*see* the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." Oh, that they were but more inclined to acknowledge his hand, and to fear his power, to seek his blessing,

and to love and believe in his Son Jesus Christ! Surely it is no discredit for the bravest seaman to confess that his heart has often sickened within him, while his hands have still perseveringly labored through these almost hopeless and melancholy scenes. The Lord has a voice that will be heard when he "thunders in the excellency of his power;" nor did I ever see that wretch who was hardy enough to call on God to damn his soul, while the thunder rolled in his ears, and the vivid lightning passed before his eyes. On the contrary, I have noticed that those who were, at other times, altogether strangers to thoughtfulness and reflection, were, at these seasons, serious, sensible men. At these times they have been ready to allow,

> "There is a God that reigns above,
> Lord of the heav'ns, and earth, and seas:"

at these moments they have seemed half disposed

> To "fear his wrath, to ask his love,
> And with their lips to sing his praise."

And now, reader, if you can find a profane infidel, whether officer or foremastman, who pretends that he never had such feelings on such occasions; that he never did, nor ever will, tremble at the sounding thunder in the skies, or the roaring, breaking surf, or a lee-shore; I will at once pronounce such person an enemy to truth, a fool, or a madman. It is not in the power of nature to view such scenes as these with indifference; and none can contemplate such deaths with calmness and serenity but men of strong grace, who have a well-grounded hope that Christ Jesus has pardoned their sins, that the eternal God is their reconciled Father, and that the hour which throws their breathless

corpse on the deadly rock, will convey their happy liberated spirit into Abraham's bosom. And this hope, this confidence, no infidel, nor profane character, ever did, or ever will possess. There is no such peace as this, saith our God, to the wicked. Their souls are like the troubled ocean, never at rest.

But it is not only in the confused elements of this lower world that there are storms and tempests. These things exist, though in another form, in the spiritual world. There are tempestuous seasons in the life of a Christian. There are storms and conflicts in his bosom, to which the ungodly part of the world are entire strangers; yes, it may truly be said, that all Christians, who have, for any length of time, been navigating this restless, dangerous sea of life, have, in their conflicts with their own hearts, with the world, and with the mighty powers of darkness, had real experience that "through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom of heaven." It sometimes falls to the lot of those who fear the Lord, and obey the voice of his servants, to walk in darkness, and have little or no light; for a season their course leads them through gloomy deserts, and thence into the mire and clay; at other times they seem to be sinking in the deep waters, and all the storms and waves of an angry ocean appear to go over their souls; they look to heaven, but clouds and darkness are round about the Almighty's throne; they see nothing but supposed tokens of anger, and signs of his threatening judgment. The thunders of his righteous violated law shake them. The lightnings and arrows of vindictive justice make them afraid. All their efforts seem useless; the storm yet increases, and hope sickens, and almost expires. Then it is that the yawning grave begins to shout, victory! victory!

Then it is that death has an envenomed sting, and heaven is beheld as a coast whose ports are shut against their entrance; as a shore where they are to be wrecked, and not saved! Of these things the thoughtless children of the world may sometimes have heard, and sometimes they may have talked about them; but still they do not, cannot understand them, till actual experience has taught the otherwise incommunicable lesson.

Should any talkative, bold professor here start up and say, "He has laid aside all his fears and his legal bondage: he has learned to walk in the freedom and liberty of the Gospel, as one who knows his soul can never founder, nor his faith ever suffer shipwreck;" it would be well for such person to attend to Saint Paul's admonition in 1 Cor. 10: 12—"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

Surely, when we consider the nature of our spiritual conflict, we must allow it to be awfully tremendous. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Eph. 6: 12. Hence it is, we are directed to "take the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand in the evil day;" and, beyond all doubt, a watchful, humble, praying spirit is an important portion of that armor. Nor is it any discredit for the most heroic Christian to confess, with the saints of old, that his fears are often multiplied, and his spirit cast down within him; that in time past he had nearly fainted, and sunk under the conflict, but that a gleam of hope still remained, which cheered his soul with the persuasion that he should one day see the goodness and the salvation of the Redeemer in the land of the living.

Real Christian life is a life of conflict; a voyage made up of many storms, and some calms. It is an ocean whose waters are sometimes smooth, but more frequently rough and stormy; it is a contest and a race, in which the flesh contends against the spirit. It is that entrance to heaven, which is so strait and narrow as to call forth not a few idle efforts, but our *agonizing* endeavors to pass its portals. Away, then, with all this empty, unhallowed boasting; since the Lord himself has pronounced that man blessed who is of a humble and contrite spirit, and that trembleth at his word. May the writer and the reader be always attended by that filial, sanctified fear, which shall keep us poor in spirit, and watchful unto prayer! Then, and not otherwise, shall we be enabled to surmount the storm, to fight the good fight, to finish our course, to keep the faith, and at last, through the redeeming love of Jesus Christ, to receive the crown.

Oh, thou adorable and blessed Saviour, I do not ask an exemption from the allotted trials of man on earth; but I beseech thee to be a present God in every time of trouble; for,

"While thou, O Lord, thyself art nigh,
Who, who can violate our rest?
Sin, earth, and hell, we can defy,
While leaning on thy gracious breast."

THE MIDDLE WATCH.

That ocean which we have lately considered under its rough and boisterous form, is not always thus rude and tempestuous. It is sometimes smooth and placid as the rivulet that glides gently through our meadows; a breeze indeed sweeps its bosom, but it is such as might carry along

the smallest skiff in safety for hours and days together. This is a pleasing sight at all times, but especially so in the midnight season. To come on deck, and find all bustling duty suspended—to perceive every sail stretched to the fair and gentle breeze—to see the vessel cut her way silently, but swiftly, through the yielding waters—to look above and behold a cloudless sky, exhibiting stars of various orders and magnitudes, dispersed through the wide expanse of boundless space—to watch the moon gliding along through their ranks, while her silver beams play across the rippled ocean as far as the eye can pierce: all this is pleasing, and has a natural tendency to promote reflection. Nor do I doubt but some of my readers have enjoyed these scenes in common with myself.

True, there are many on board who care for none of these things; men who seem to have neither eyes to behold, nor hearts to admire, the wonders of creation and providence. By them the fair weather middle watch is passed through in a variety of unprofitable ways. Some walk the deck in sullen musings on what they consider their hard fate. Others more cheerful, but equally uninterested with the works of God, collect together, and tell marvellous tales of enchanted castles, of Blue-Beard, or Jack the giant-killer. Others join in singing some love-ditty, or warlike song of past battles and conquests. And some, wrapping themselves in their watch-coat, sleep away their time till, roused by the call of duty, or the expiration of the watch, they descend to their hammocks. On these occasions, the thoughtful, intelligent Christian sailor will not break in upon, or interrupt his comrades in their enjoyments; so long as they appear to be happy, and no improper language is used, he will rather rejoice that they are comfortable. Though he may esteem

their amusements as trifling, he will not use reproachful language, nor display the part of an officious intruder; but will seek his own superior enjoyment in thought and reflection on what surrounds him. Leaning over the gangway, or quietly pacing and repacing the deck, he will converse with God, and with himself, in some such way as this:

"Eternal wisdom! thee we praise,
Thee the creation sings:
With thy loved name, rocks, hills, and seas,
And heaven's high palace rings.

There thou hast bid the globes of light
Their endless circuits run;
There the pale planet rules the night,
And day obeys the sun.

If down I turn my wond'ring eyes
On clouds and storms below,
Those under regions of the skies
Thy numerous glories show.

Here the rough mountains of the deep
Obey thy strong command;
Thy breath can raise the billows steep,
Or sink them to the sand.

Thy glories blaze all nature round,
And strike the wond'ring sight,
Through skies, and seas, and solid ground,
With terror and delight."

But what are stars, or sun, or moon, or this earth, or yonder visible heavens, in comparison to one immortal soul? There is an appointed time, when these heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and these elements shall melt with fervent heat! But my immortal spirit cannot pass away! There is a day coming when the stars shall

fall from heaven, as the fig-tree casteth her untimely leaves to the ground; a day when "this earth, and all that it inherits, shall dissolve;" when this ocean shall give up its myriads of dead, and then be found no more. But my soul must still exist! O, most gracious Lord God, do thou help me, a poor worm, but still thy creature, and an immortal being, to think of thee as I ought, to love thee as thou deservest, to obey thee in all thy commands. Keep my soul while it is hovering over the gulf of eternity, pardon all its sins through the atoning blood of Christ, and sanctify all its faculties by thy Holy Spirit, before it quits this short and fleeting life, to receive its eternal portion. O my God, ere that day arrives, do thou quell every sinful passion within my breast; suppress every unhallowed disposition of my will, as thy power has quelled every angry storm, and subdued every raging motion of these surrounding waters. O let my soul be steadily and rapidly urging on its way to thine everlasting kingdom, as our vessel is now pursuing her course to her port of destination.

THE ANCHOR.

So necessary are anchors to shipping, that they could not possibly be safe without them. On ten thousand occasions they are the security of every vessel. By their means the ship is held in safety while the storm howls through the masts and rigging, and the breaking surge rolls by on either side. By them the vessel is prevented from drifting down with the current on some deadly shoal, and from being drawn in shore towards dangerous rocks, in calm weather. Often, when dismasted and driving as a log, helpless and almost without hope, towards some harbor-

less coast or wreck-covered beach, the anchor is the seaman's last and only refuge. Just before his bark drifts among the angry breakers he lets it go; it plunges through the troubled ocean, drives through every restless wave, and, fastening on the firm bottom, rides his trembling, half-wrecked ship in safety through the storm.

Hence it is, that in the Scriptures our Lord Jesus Christ is called the Christian's anchor of hope, Heb. 6: 19; and said to be both sure and steadfast. The mariner's anchor may, and indeed does sometimes fail him; and in that failure his last fond hope is gone, and destruction quickly follows. But the Lord Jesus Christ never did, nor ever will, fail one soul who makes him his refuge and hope, his trust and confidence. Oh, how great is the blessing of having such an anchor as this to fly to! How great is the calamity of being destitute of it, when the day of trial, or the hour of danger arrives! It is a blessing always needful to have at hand. The soul without it would be more forlorn and unsafe than a coasting vessel without ground-tackling. We have seen how many perils surround and await the new-launched bark; but these are really nothing in comparison to what encompass and waylay the Christian; for

> "Dangers of every shape and name
> Attend the followers of the Lamb;
> Who leave the world's deceitful shore,
> And leave it to return no more."

At one time the powerful stream of human corruptions, or the impetuous tide of vicious example, threatens to sweep him down on the rocks of destruction. At another, the secret and almost imperceptible, but no less dangerous shoals of prosperity, fame, and smiling circumstances, endanger his very existence. At another, the storms of vio-

lent temptation, the overwhelming waves of an accusing conscience, or the furious gusts of unbelief and satanic suggestions, may be on the point of dashing him on the very reefs of perdition. And why is it, amidst so many perils, that his immortal spirit does not suffer shipwreck? Because Jesus is its anchor and its stay—the eternal God and Saviour of men is his present help in every time of trouble. Happy indeed would that merchant be who could procure an anchor of infallible security to his vessel under every emergency. It would be considered by himself and his crew as beyond all price. But, alas! such an anchor of safety for the bodies and natural lives of men is not to be forged out of the perishing materials of this sinful world. Jesus Christ, however, is all this to the Christian mariner's soul. He sends him forth, it is true, to contend with the dangers and buffetings of this world; but he has prayed that he might be kept from the evil, John 17: 15; and therefore he will be preserved by an infallible and omnipotent hand.

"Though waves and storms go o'er his head,
Though strength, and health, and friends be gone;
Though joys be wither'd all and dead,
Though every comfort be withdrawn;
On this his steadfast soul relies,
Jesus, his anchor, never dies."

THE VOYAGE WELL ENDED, AND THE SHIP MOORED IN PORT.

At length the voyage is brought to its close; the homeward-bound passage is completed. Let us reflect upon this period, so much to be remembered by the wandering mariners. With what cheerful countenances, with what joyful,

what inexpressible feelings, did the weather-beaten and long-absent voyagers behold and enter their long lost native port? This was the happy hour, the thoughts of which bore up their spirits under the burning suns of Africa, and amidst the snows and ice-mountains of Greenland. Yes, it was the thought of home, and the hope of returning thither, that made all the evils of foreign climates tolerable, and all the hardships and privations of the voyage seem light. And now those thoughts and hopes and expectations are more than realized; the ship has entered within the pier-head; the anchor is gone—the sails are unbent—the crew have stripped off their tarry, filthy garments—have clothed themselves in new apparel—are gone on shore, and in the welcome smiles of their dearest friends and kindred have forgotten all the storms and dangers and sufferings of the voyage, or only remember and speak of them to increase their present happiness.

But what is all this when compared to the ripened Christian ending the voyage of life in peace, and entering into that haven of eternal rest where he so much longed to be? All comparison sinks into nothing and vanity. Yet we may pursue the parallel, and observe that it was the hope of such a happy end which supported his spirits through the numberless trials and sufferings of life. When guilt and renewed temptations depressed and grieved his soul; when pain and sickness wrung and enfeebled his body; when poverty marked his circumstances; and unkindness or neglect sat on the brow of every pretended friend; it was the hope of heaven that cheered his bosom, and strengthened him to contend with all the ills and evils he had to meet by the way. And now behold, in the Lord's best time, all his fears and sufferings are ended, and happy

experience has taught him the meaning of that voice which proclaimed to St. John from heaven, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

To the real Christian, whether seaman or landsman, death comes as a kind messenger to bid him ship off this mortal coil with all its defiled and defiling garments. With one hand he turns the mortal out of a frail tenement of clay, and with the other he opens to him the gates of heaven, where Jesus beckons him to enter, and clothes him with a spotless robe, puts a palm in his hand and a crown upon his head. There, in the company of his dearest departed Christian friends, in the society of angels and archangels, and in the smiles of his glorified and visible Redeemer, he forgets all his former toils and sorrows and temptations, or only remembers and talks of them to increase his present and eternal felicity; for there

"All is tranquil and serene,
Calm and undisturbed repose;
There no cloud can intervene,
There no angry tempest blows!

"Every tear is wiped away,
Sighs no more shall heave his breast;
Night is lost in endless day—
Sorrow, in eternal rest."

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THE

SIN AND DANGER

OF

DESPISING A PREACHED GOSPEL.

One of the exhortations of St. Paul to the Thessalonians is, "Despise not prophesyings;" by which it is generally agreed, he intended the ministry of the Word. He designed to guard those, to whom the Gospel was tendered, against the neglect or abuse of the great religious privilege of attending on its public ministration. If it was necessary to address so pointed an exhortation to persons living in the apostolic age, it will be generally admitted not to be less necessary at the present time, when so many are found either trampling upon, or undervaluing and slighting this important means of grace. We would, therefore, call upon you to consider the nature of this offence and its malignity and fatal consequences.

1. *The* nature *of this offence.*

There may have been unholy ministers, who, by their unguarded conduct, have contributed to destroy the influence of divine truth in the world; and it cannot be doubted that a dangerous weapon has, by such, been placed in the hands of its avowed enemies. False prophets have also gone forth, proclaiming sentiments directly at variance with the Gospel of Christ, and seducing men's minds from the grand characteristic doctrines of salvation. This is a cause of mourning and lamentation to the truly pious. But, blessed be God, a holy and Evangelical ministry has not ceased; and instances of deplorable departure, in some, from the truth as it is in Jesus, form no excuse for under-

valuing ordinances appointed of God for the advancement of his kingdom in the world. We may be guilty, therefore, of the sin of despising a preached Gospel,

1. *By refusing to hear.* In a country so abounding in religious privileges as ours, how lamentable, that we should have to mourn over the sad condition of thousands, who neither visit the sanctuary nor hallow the Sabbath. How affecting the thought, that those who revere the institutions of public worship, and who abandon the pursuits of this transitory scene for the duty of attending on its exercises, are only exceptions from a countless multitude, who seem willing to live in the habitual neglect of ordinances on which celestial spirits look down with veneration. What words can mark the guilt of those who trample on God's holy Sabbath, and either from devotion to business or pleasure, or culpable indolence, refuse to place themselves under the sound of that Gospel which has "brought life and immortality to light." What an insult to the great Head of the church, to consider ordinances, established by him, to be unnecessary. Suppose that he who absents himself from the house of prayer, were employed from morning to evening, in searching the Scriptures, and in private acts of devotion; this, if it have not the apology of want of health, or some unavoidable impediment, cannot excuse the guilt of forsaking the assemblies of God's people. The substitution of his own means for those of God, is an awful encroachment on the prerogative of the supreme Lawgiver.

But even this evasion is, for the most part, wanting in non-attendants on the public worship of God. They are generally scoffers, whose "sins go before them to judgment." And they who neglect the house of God, because, in the pride of their hearts, they suppose they have the means of spiritual improvement in their own habitations, should consider whether they are not almost as deeply ingulfed in guilt. It is presumption, or the grossest self-deception, to profess to worship God, while that open, external homage, is withheld, which is essential to the very

existence and perpetuity of religion in the world. O that we may not be in the number of either one or other of those classes! God grant that no persuasions of sinful men, no depraved bias of our own minds, no deceptive excuses, may tempt us to withdraw from a punctual attendance in those hallowed places, where the Lord Jesus has promised his special presence and blessing.

2. *By listening to it in an unsuitable frame of mind.*

They who entirely, or for the most part, absent themselves from the sanctuary, are not the only neglecters of the preaching of the word. How many go there, whose marked indifference, whose listless inattention, whose whole demeanor indicate that they hear without deriving the least improvement. What a melancholy spectacle, to see levity of countenance and conduct in some, and drowsiness in others, when the most pointed and earnest addresses are made by the minister of God, on subjects involving their everlasting welfare. How painful to the faithful minister, anxious to bring sinners to Jesus, to see the very objects of his solicitude, those whom he would "pluck as brands from the burning," evincing the most entire unconcern in the momentous subject of his communications. They who are all life and activity in the walks of business, or of pleasure, during the week, deny to the bestower of all their mercies, a few short hours of devout attention on the single day in seven which he has hallowed to himself; and that, not merely for his own glory, but as a means of incalculable blessings to mankind. Can he hold those guiltless, who thus trifle with his honor and with the provisions of his grace?

And how can we excuse, from a measure of this guilt, those who, with the appearance of attention in the house of God, exhibit so little of its fruit? They seem to listen with seriousness and gravity; but they understand little, retain less, and feel not at all. Except in the article of exterior deportment, they are little better than the wandering gazer, or the lethargic sleeper, already noticed. They attend from

habit, and, if conscience have any share in impelling to the duty, it is too easily satisfied with the mere formalities of an outward worship. We might also number among despisers the censorious, captious, angry hearer of the Word, whose chief delight seems to consist in finding fault, and who arraigns and condemns, at the bar of his own contracted or perverted understanding, almost every minister and every sermon. And we might add to this enumeration, those who are ever wandering in quest of novelty, and are never satisfied with the simple truths of the Gospel; but delight to have them clothed in some splendid garb, which dazzles the imagination, and conceals from the carnal mind whatever it may deem offensive in the blessed revelation of God. Ah! it is but too evident, such know not the truth, and are enemies to the transforming power of true and experimental religion.

3. *By neglecting its right improvement.*

The ever-blessed God has not conferred so transcendant a gift as that of his well-beloved Son, without demanding an interest to be evinced, on our part, in some measure corresponding to the unutterable value of the grant. We may not openly profane the Lord's day, nor scornfully neglect the ordinances of religion; we may yield an outward compliance with the forms of piety; we may observe due seriousness of demeanor in the house of prayer; we may even listen with avidity to the communications of the pulpit, and give a decided preference to a vital and effective ministry; but O, how short we shall come of the demands of Christianity, if we stop here. Might we not venture to say, that all we have mentioned may consist with a state of mind laboring under the most determined and alarming unbelief?

It is something more than external homage, which God requires. Nothing will satisfy him but "truth in the inward parts:" faith that credits the divine testimony; love to Christ, to evince its reality; holiness of life, the blessed fruit of both. The unbelieving heart is a partaker of no spiritual

blessing; its possessor has not complied with the primary command of heaven; and all *his* attempts to honor God, who rejects the Son of his love, merit only his indignant rejection. He who exercises a true faith in Christ, has been conscious that eternal misery or eternal happiness is suspended on the reception or refusal of his offers; and has really accepted the gift which infinite mercy bestowed. O be persuaded that the Gospel requires faith, and love, and holiness; and never will it charm away the maladies of the fall, until its sacred truths have taken full possession of the heart. Nothing but the unequivocal, heartfelt acceptance of the Gospel, will invest any with its countless blessings. The line which separates one sinner from another becomes invisible, when compared with the mighty barrier which divides between the sinner and the saint. Destitute of faith, we have not made one remove from enmity to God. If not in word, yet in spirit, we are despisers of the Gospel. We are leaning, whatever our dependence, on a broken reed which will pierce our very hearts. We have reason to hear, with terror, a God of truth addressing us, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish." Acts 13: 41. We proceed to show,

II. *The* MALIGNITY AND FATAL CONSEQUENCES *of despising a preached Gospel.*

After what has been said, no elaborate argument is necessary to prove its criminality. We ask you to view it in all its *malignity*. Is it less heinous, because of the frequency of its commission? Surely it cannot be, that the path which leads to destruction is consecrated by the numbers that walk therein! O, no. However many are involved in the sin, the nature of unbelief continues the same: the same in essence, the same in all its offensive qualities, the same under all the varying aspects it assumes, from the open neglect of public worship, to the most subtle exhibition of a false profession. The despiser of a preached Gospel is involved in all the guilt of this dark and malignant evil; by which the truth of God is denied, the Saviour of men

rejected, the heart hardened, the affections debased, and the whole man contaminated. If you would know the full guilt of despising the ministry of reconciliation, you must reflect on the unspeakable love in which its offers originated, the divine authority by which they are enforced, the display of grace which they contain. You must witness a God of infinite love stretching forth to a guilty world the sceptre of his mercy. You must hear the compassionate Redeemer calling upon "all the ends of the earth" to "look unto him, and be saved." You must conceive aright of all the rich provisions of his grace. And then you must contemplate the apostate creature, whom the Majesty of heaven has stooped from his radiant throne to save, rejecting his gracious offers, despising the Son of his love, and proudly turning away from the "unsearchable riches" of the Gospel. O, if there be guilt in living without the knowledge and fear of God, in "counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing," in undervaluing privileges of the highest order and longest duration, in trifling with your never-dying souls, then "despise not prophesyings," but wait with reverence and attention upon the communications of the ambassadors of Christ, "beseeching you, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God."

Reflect on *the fatal consequences* of despising their offers of God's mercy. "If our Gospel be hid," says the apostle, "it is hid to them that are lost." What an alarming intimation! A soul lost for ever! When we endeavor to conceive of this, our limited faculties are confounded in the contemplation. It is not annihilation. The soul is possessed of an immortal being. But how affecting the idea, that, after millions of ages shall have rolled along, it shall still exist, deprived of all enjoyment, and enduring misery from which it can never, never be relieved. And all this, remember, is the effect of holding in contempt the word of God. "The Lamb in the midst of the throne" was despised—"the Lion of the tribe of Judah" pronounces the condemnation of the offender. "He that sitteth in the

heavens shall laugh" at the despisers of his truth; "the Lord shall have them in derision." Yet a little while, and the wonders of eternity shall open to your view. Behold, then, ye despisers of the Gospel, the day of your merciful visitation ended. Your cries of mercy will be all in vain. The sword of vengeance is drawn, and nothing but your endless destruction can satisfy the demands of justice. "Consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver." "How shall ye escape, if ye neglect so great salvation?"

O, "see that ye refuse not him that now speaketh from heaven." He now warns you of your danger, and compassionately calls upon you to avoid it. Fly to your benignant Saviour without delay. There is but one refuge—betake yourselves to it. There is but one hiding-place from the tempest of God's wrath—repair to its shelter. There is but one fountain—wash in it and be clean. There is but one sure foundation—build on it for eternity. There is but one sacrifice for sin—rely on its infinite merit. There is but one Mediator between God and man—cast all the mighty interests of your souls upon him. Let him be your friend, your Saviour, your exemplar, your portion, your defence, your everlasting Redeemer.

But these things you will never do, while you live in the neglect of the institutions of religion. You must revere God's Sabbath, and believe his truth, and venerate and keep his ordinances. The Gospel, revealed in his word, preached by his ministers, and applied to your hearts in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power, must be the means of your salvation. You cannot turn away from it with impunity. O, then, become diligent readers of the word, and attentive hearers of its illustration and enforcement in the sanctuaries of the Lord. Come to it with the prayerful desire of being profited, and it may be made "the power of God and the wisdom of God" to the salvation of your souls. None ever wilfully neglected the worship of God and prospered. Millions have, in his sacred house, been visited with

the impressions of his grace, swayed into the obedience of faith, made the subjects of his pardoning mercy, and, after a life of holiness, are now realizing the rest and enjoyment of heaven. God grant that you may become the followers of those, "who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises."

Raise, thoughtless sinner, raise thine eye,
Behold the Judgment drawing nigh:
Behold, the balance is displayed,
And thou must be exactly weighed.

See in one scale God's holy law;
Mark with what force its precepts draw;
Canst thou the awful test sustain?
Thy works how light! thy thoughts how vain!

Behold the hand of God appears,
And writes in dreadful characters,
TEKEL! thy soul is wanting found;
With trembling, hear the awful sound.

Let fear thy sin-bound heart embrace;
Let guilty shame o'erspread thy face,
Conviction through thy conscience roll,
And deep repentance fill thy soul.

One only hope can yet prevail:
Jesus for thee can turn the scale;
Can give thy guilty conscience peace,
And save thee by his righteousness.

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ELIZA CUNNINGHAM.

BY REV. JOHN NEWTON,

RECTOR OF ST. MARY WOOLNOTH, LONDON.

When the following narrative was drawn up, the writer was aware that his feelings rendered him incompetent to judge how much of a relation, every part of which was interesting to himself, might be fit to offer to the public. He therefore wrote only for his friends, and printed no more copies than would be sufficient to distribute within the circle of his personal acquaintance. But as the paper has been much inquired after, and many of his friends have expressed a wish that it might be more extensively circulated, he has at length yielded to their judgment.

It is to be lamented, that in this enlightened age, religion should, by many, be thought the only subject unworthy of a serious inquiry. And that while, in every branch of science, they are cautious of admitting any theory which cannot stand the test of experiment, they treat the use of the term Experimental, when applied to religion, with contempt. Yet there are many things connected with this subject, in which, whether we are willing or unwilling, we are and must be nearly interested. Death, for instance, is inevitable; and the consequences of death must be important. Many persons die, as they live, thoughtless of what consequences may await them. Others leave the world with reluctance and terror. And there are others who, though conscious that they are sinners, and sure that they are about to enter on an unchangeable and endless state of existence, possess peace, composure, and joy. These declare, that they owe this happy state of mind to their dependence on Jesus the Saviour, on whose death and mediation they have built their hopes. And who can disprove their words? Such an instance is now in the reader's hands. The fact is indubitable. A child, under the age of fifteen, did thus rejoice in the midst of pains and agonies, to the admiration of all who beheld her. She was willing to leave all her friends whom she dearly loved, and by whom she was tenderly beloved; for she knew whom she believed, and that when she should be absent from the body, she should be present with the Lord. With this assurance, she triumphed in the prospect of glory, and smiled upon the approach of death.

NARRATIVE, ETC.

As I write, not for the eye of the public, but chiefly to put a testimony of the Lord's goodness into the hands of my dear friends, who have kindly afforded us their sympathy and prayers on the late occasion, I do not mean either to restrain the emotions of my heart, or to apologize for them. I shall write simply and freely, as I might speak to a person to whose intimacy and tenderness I might fully entrust myself, and who, I know, will bear with all my weaknesses.

In May, 1782, my sister Cunningham was at Edinburgh, chiefly on the account of her eldest daughter, then in the 14th year of her age, who was very ill of a consumption. She had already buried an only son, at the age of twelve; and while all a mother's care and feelings were engaged by the rapid decline of a second amiable child, she was unexpectedly bereaved of an affectionate and excellent husband. Her trials were great; but the Lord had prepared her for them. She was a believer. Her faith was strong, her graces active, her conduct exemplary. She walked with God, and he supported her. And though she was a tender and sympathizing friend, she had a happy firmness of temper; so that her character, as a Christian, and the propriety of her behavior in every branch of relative life, appeared with peculiar advantage in the season of affliction. She returned to Anstruther a widow, with her sick child, who languished till October, and then died.

Though my sister had many valuable and pleasing connections in Scotland, yet her strongest tie being broken, she readily accepted my invitation to come and live with us. She was not only dear to me as Mrs. Newton's sister, but we had lived long in the habits of intimate friendship. I knew her worth, and she was partial to me. She had yet

one child remaining, her dear Eliza. We already had a dear orphan niece, whom we had, about seven years before, adopted for our own daughter. My active, fond imagination anticipated the time of her arrival, and drew a pleasing picture of the addition the company of such a sister, such a friend, would make to the happiness of our family. The children likewise—there was no great disparity between them, either in years or stature. From what I had heard of Eliza, I was prepared to love her before I saw her; though she came afterwards into my hands like a heap of untold gold, which, when counted over, proves to be a larger sum than was expected. My fancy paired and united these children; I hoped that the friendship between us and my sister would be perpetuated in them. I seemed to see them, like twin sisters, of one heart and mind, habited nearly alike, always together, always with us.

Such was my plan; but the Lord's plan was very different, and therefore mine failed. It is happy for us, poor short-sighted mortals, unable as we are to foresee the consequences of our own wishes, that if we know and trust him, he often is pleased to put a merciful negative upon our purposes, and condescends to choose better for us than we can for ourselves. What might have been the issue of my plan, had it taken place, I know not; but I can now praise and adore him for the gracious issue of his. I praise his name, that I can cheerfully comply with his word, which says, "Be still, and know that I am God." I not only can bow, as it becomes a creature and a sinner to do, to his sovereignty, but I admire his wisdom and goodness, and can say from my heart, "he has done all things well."

My sister had settled her affairs previous to her removal; and nothing remained but to take leave of her friends, of whom she had many, not only in Anstruther, but

in different parts of the country. In February, 1783, I received a letter from her, which, before I opened it, I expected was to inform me that she was upon the road in her way to London. But the information was, that, in a little journey she had made to bid a friend farewell, she had caught a violent cold, which brought on a fever and a cough, with other symptoms, which, although she described as gently as possible, that we might not be alarmed, obliged *me* to give up instantly the hope of seeing her. Succeeding letters confirmed my suspicions; her malady increased, and she was soon confined to her bed.

Eliza was at school at Musselburgh. Till then she had enjoyed a perfect state of health; but while her dear mother was rapidly declining, *she* likewise caught a great cold, and her life likewise was soon thought to be in danger. On this occasion, that fortitude and resolution which strongly marked my sister's character, was remarkably displayed. She knew that her own race was almost finished; she earnestly desired that Eliza might live or die with us; and the physicians advised a speedy removal into the south. Accordingly, to save time, and to save Eliza from the impression which the sight of a dying mother might probably make upon her spirits, and possibly apprehensive that the interview might make too great an impression upon her own, she sent this, her only, beloved child, directly to London, without letting her come home to take a last leave of her. She contented herself with committing and bequeathing her child to our care and love, in a letter, which, I believe, was the last she was able to write.

Thus powerfully recommended by the pathetic charge of a dying mother, the dearest friend we had upon earth, and by that plea for compassion which her illness might have strongly urged even upon strangers, we received our dear

Eliza, as a trust, and as a treasure, on the 15th of March. My sister lived long enough to have the comfort of knowing, not only that she was safely arrived, but was perfectly pleased with her new situation. She was now freed from all earthly cares. She suffered much in the remaining part of her illness, but she knew whom she believed; she possessed a peace past understanding, and a hope full of glory. She entered into the joy of her Lord on the 10th of May, 1783, respected and regretted by all who knew her.

I soon perceived that the Lord had sent me a treasure indeed. Eliza's person was agreeable. There was an ease and elegance in her whole address, and a gracefulness in her movements, till long illness and great weakness bowed her down. Her disposition was lively, her genius quick and inventive; and if she had enjoyed health, she probably would have excelled in every thing that required ingenuity. Her understanding, particularly her judgment and her sense of propriety, were far above her years. There was something in her appearance that usually procured her favor at the first sight. She was honored by the notice of several persons of distinction, which, though I thankfully attribute in part to their kindness to me, I believe was a good deal owing to something rather uncommon in her.

But her principal endearing qualities, which could be only fully known to us who lived with her, were the sweetness of her temper, and a heart formed for the exercise of affection, gratitude, and friendship. Whether, when at school, she might have heard sorrowful tales from children, who, having lost their parents, met with a great difference in point of tenderness when they came under the direction of uncles and aunts, and might think that all uncles and aunts were alike, I know not; but I have understood since from herself, that she did not come to us with any

highly-raised expectations of the treatment she was to meet with.

But as she found, (the Lord in mercy having opened our hearts to receive her,) that it was hardly possible for her own parents to have treated her more tenderly, and that it was from that time the business and the pleasure of our lives to study how to oblige her, and how to alleviate the afflictions which we were unable to remove; so we likewise found, that the seeds of our kindness could hardly be sown in a more promising and fruitful soil. I know not that either her aunt or I ever saw a cloud upon her countenance during the time she was with us. It is true, we did not, we could not, unnecessarily cross her; but if we thought it expedient to overrule any proposal she made, she acquiesced with a sweet smile; and we were certain we should never hear of that proposal again. Her delicacy, however, was quicker than our observation; and she would sometimes say, when we could not perceive the least reason for it, "I am afraid I answer you peevishly; indeed I did not intend it; if I did, I ask your pardon; I should be very ungrateful if I thought any pleasure equal to that of endeavoring to please you." It is no wonder that we dearly loved such a child.

The hectic fever, cough, and sweats, which she brought with her from Scotland, were subdued in the course of the summer, and there appeared no reason to apprehend that she would be taken off very suddenly. But still there was a worm preying upon the root of this pretty gourd. She had seldom any severe pain till within the last fortnight of her life, and usually slept well; but when awake she was always ill. I believe she knew not a single hour of perfect ease; and they who intimately knew her state, could not but wonder to see her so placid, cheerful, and attentive,

when in company, as she generally was. Many a time, when the tears have silently stolen down her cheeks, if she saw that her aunt or I observed her, she would wipe them away, come to us with a smile and a kiss, and say, "Do not be uneasy—I am not very ill—I can bear it—I shall be better presently;" or to that effect.

In April, 1784, we put her under the care of my dear friend, Dr. Benamor. To the blessing of the Lord on his skill and endeavors, I ascribe the pleasure of having her continued with us so long; nor can I sufficiently express my gratitude for his assiduous, unwearied attention, nor for his great tenderness. She is now gone, and can no more repeat, what she has often spoken, of the great comfort it was to her to have so affectionate and sympathizing a physician; but while I live, I hope it will always be my pleasure to acknowledge our great obligations to him on her account. His prescriptions were carefully followed. But what can the most efficacious medicines or the best physicians avail to prolong life, when the hour approaches, in which the prayer of the great Intercessor must be accomplished, "Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me may be with me where I am, to behold my glory!" This was the proper cause of my dear Eliza's death. The Lord sent this child to me to be brought up for him; he owned my poor endeavors; and when her education was completed, and she was ripened for heaven, he took her home to himself. He has richly paid me my wages, in the employment itself, and in the happy issue.

I have thus put together, in one view, a brief account of what relates to her illness, till within the last three weeks of her pilgrimage. I now come to what is much more important and interesting. Her excellent parents had conscientiously endeavored to bring her up in the nurture and

admonition of the Lord, and principles of religion were instilled into her from infancy. Their labors were so far successful, that no child could be more obedient or obliging, or more remote from evil habits or evil tempers. But I could not perceive, when she first came to us, that she had any heart-affecting sense of divine things; but being under my roof, she, of course, when her health would permit, attended on my ministry, and was usually present when I prayed and expounded the Scriptures, morning and evening, in the family. Friends and ministers were likewise frequently with us, whose character and conversation were well suited to engage her notice, and to help her to form a right idea of the Christian principles and temper.

'Knowing that she was of a thinking turn, I left her to make her own reflections upon what she saw and heard, committing her to the direction of the Lord, from whom I had received her, and entreating him to be her effectual teacher. When I did attempt to talk with her on the concerns of her soul, she could give me no answer but with tears. But I soon had great encouragement to hope that the Lord had both enlightened her understanding, and had drawn the desires of her heart to himself. Great was her delight in the ordinances; exemplary her attention under the preaching. To be debarred from going to hear at our stated times was a trial, which, though she patiently bore, seemed to affect her more than any other; and she did not greatly care what she endured in the rest of the week, provided she was well enough to attend the public worship. The judicious observations she occasionally made upon what had passed in conversation, upon incidents, books, and sermons, indicated a sound, scriptural judgment, and a spiritual taste. And my hope was confirmed by her whole deportment, which was becoming the Gospel of Christ. So that

had she died suddenly on any day within about a year and a half past, I should have had no doubt that she had passed from death unto life. But I could seldom prevail with her to speak of herself; if she did, it was with the greatest diffidence and caution.

In the last two or three weeks of her life, she became acquainted with acute pain, to which she had till then been much a stranger. Her gentle spirit, which had borne up under a long and languishing illness, was not so capable of supporting pain. It did not occasion any improper temper of language, but it wore her away apace. Friday, the 30th of September, she was down stairs for the last time, and then she was brought down and carried up in my arms.

It now became very desirable to hear from herself a more explicit account of the hope that was in her; especially as upon some symptoms of an approaching mortification, she appeared to be a little alarmed, and of course not thoroughly reconciled to the thoughts of death. Her aunt waited for the first convenient opportunity of intimating to her the probability that the time of her departure was at hand. The next morning, Saturday, the first of October, presented one. She found herself remarkably better: her pains were almost gone; her spirits revived: the favorable change was visible in her countenance.

Her aunt began to break the subject to her, by saying, "My dear, were you not extremely ill last night?"

She answered, "Indeed I was."

"Had you not been relieved, I think you could not have continued long."

"I believe I could not."

"My dear, I have been very anxiously concerned for your life."

"But I hope, my dear aunt, you are not so now."

She then opened her mind, and spoke freely. I cannot repeat the whole. The substance was to this effect.

"My views of things have been, for some time, very different from what they were when I came to you. I have seen and felt the vanity of childhood and youth."

Her aunt said, "I believe you have long made conscience of secret prayer."

She answered, "Yes, I have long and earnestly sought the Lord, with reference to the change that is now approaching. I have not that full assurance which is so desirable; but I have a hope, I trust a good hope; and I believe the Lord will give me whatever he sees necessary for me before he is pleased to take me hence." She then said, "I have prayed to him to fit me for himself; and then, whether it be sooner or later, it signifies but little."

Here was a comfortable point gained. We were satisfied that she had given up all expectations of living, and could speak of her departure without being distressed.

It will not be expected that a child of her age should speak systematically. Nor had she learned her religion from a system or form of words, however sound. The Lord himself was her teacher. But from what little she had at different times said to me, I was well satisfied that she had received a true conviction of the nature of sin, and of her own state by nature as a sinner. When she spoke of the Lord, she meant the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd, who gathers such lambs in his arms, and carries them in his bosom. She believed him to be God and man in one person; and that hope of which she was not ashamed, was founded on his atonement, grace, and power. As I do not intend to put words into her mouth which she never spoke, I mention this, lest any should be disappointed at not

finding a certain phraseology to which they have been accustomed.

Her apparent revival was of short duration. In the evening of the same day, she complained of a sore throat, which became worse, and by Sabbath noon threatened suffocation. When Dr. Benamor, who the day before had almost entertained hopes of her recovery, found her so suddenly and greatly altered, he could not, at the moment, prevent some signs of concern from appearing in his countenance. She quickly perceived it, and desired he would plainly tell her his sentiments.

When he had recovered himself, he said, "My dear, you are not so well as when I saw you on Saturday."

She answered, that she trusted all would be well soon.

He replied, that whether she lived or died it would be well, and to the glory of God. He told me that he had much pleasing conversation with her that morning, some particulars of which he had committed to writing, but that he had lost the paper. From that time she may be said to have been dying, as we expected her departure from one hour to another.

On Monday, October 3d, she was almost free from any complaint in the throat; but there was again an appearance of a mortification in her legs; it was, however, again repelled by the means which Dr. Benamor prescribed.

I recollect but little of the incidents of this day: in general she was in great pain, sometimes in agonies, unable to remain many minutes in the same position; but her mind was peaceful. She possessed a spirit of recollection and prayer; and her chief attention to earthly things was confined to the concern she saw in those around her. That she might not increase their distress, she strove to conceal the sense of her sufferings. It pleased the Lord wonder-

fully to support my dear Mrs. Newton, and she had a tolerable night's rest, though I did not expect the child would live till morning.

On Tuesday, the 4th, about nine in the morning, we all thought her dying, and waited nearly two hours by her bedside, for her last breath. She was much convulsed, and in great agonies.

I said, "My dear, you are going to heaven; and I hope, by the grace of God, we shall in due time follow you."

She could not speak, but let us know by a gentle nod of her head, and a sweet smile, that she attended to what I said.

I repeated to her many passages of Scripture and verses of hymns, to each of which she made the same kind of answer. Though silent, her looks were more expressive than words.

Towards eleven o'clock, a great quantity of coagulated phlegm, which she had not strength to bring up, made her rattle violently in the throat, which we considered as a sign that death was at hand; and as she seemed unwilling to take something that was offered to her, we were loath to disturb her in her last moments, (as we supposed,) by pressing her. I think she must have died in a quarter of an hour, had not Dr. Benamor just then come into the room.

He felt her pulse, and observed that she was not near death by her pulse, and desired that something might be given her. She was perfectly sensible, though still unable to speak, but expressed her unwillingness to take any thing, by her strongest efforts. However, she yielded to entreaty, and a teaspoonful or two of some liquid soon cleared the passage, and she revived. Her pain, however, was extreme, and her disappointment great. I never saw her so near impatience as on this occasion. As soon as she could speak,

she cried, "O cruel, cruel, cruel, to recall me, when I was so happy, and so near gone! I wish you had not come—I long to go home." But in a few minutes she grew composed, assented to what the doctor said of her duty to wait the Lord's time; and from that hour, though her desires to depart and to be with her Saviour were stronger and stronger, she cheerfully took whatever was offered to her, and frequently asked for something, of her own accord.

How often, were we to have our choice, should we counteract our own prayers! I had entreated the Lord to prolong her life, till she could leave an indisputable testimony behind her for our comfort: yet when I saw her agony, and heard her say, O how cruel to stop me! I was for a moment almost of her mind, and could hardly help wishing that the doctor had delayed his visit a little longer. But if she had died then, we should have been deprived of what we saw and heard the two following days; the remembrance of which is now much more precious to me than silver or gold.

When the doctor came on Wednesday, she entreated him to tell her how long he thought she might live.

He said, "Are you in earnest, my dear?"

She answered, "Indeed I am."

At that time there were very great appearances that a mortification was actually begun. He therefore told her, he thought it possible she might hold out till eight in the evening, but did not expect she could survive midnight at farthest. On hearing him say so, low as she was, her eyes seemed to sparkle with their former vivacity; and fixing them on him with an air of ineffable satisfaction, she said, "Oh, that is good news indeed." And she repeated it as such to a person who came soon after into the room, and said, with lively emotions of joy, "The doctor tells me I

shall stay here but a few hours longer." In the afternoon she noticed and counted the clock, I believe every time it struck; and when it struck seven, she said, "Another hour, and then." But it pleased the Lord to spare her to us another day.

She suffered much in the course of Wednesday night, but was quite resigned and patient. Our kind servants, who, from their love to her and to us, watched her day and night with a solicitude and tenderness which wealth is too poor to purchase, were the only witnesses of the affectionate and grateful manner in which she repeatedly thanked them for their services and attention to her. Though such an acknowledgment was no more than due, yet coming from herself, and at such a time, they highly valued it. She added her earnest prayers that the Lord would reward them. To her prayers my heart says, Amen. May they be comforted of the Lord in their dying hours, as she was, and meet with equal kindness from those around them!

I was surprised on Thursday morning to find her not only alive, but in some respects better. The tokens of mortification again disappeared. This was her last day, and it was a memorable day with us. When Dr. Benamor asked her how she did,

"Truly happy," said she, "and if this be dying, it is a pleasant thing to die." (The very expression which a dear friend of mine used upon her death-bed a few years ago.)

She said to me, about ten o'clock, "My dear uncle, I would not change conditions with any person upon earth: O, how gracious is the Lord to me! Oh, what a change is before me!" She was several times asked if she could wish to live, provided the Lord would restore her to perfect health; her answer was, "Not for all the world;" and sometimes, "Not for a thousand worlds."

The last time she was asked this question, she said, as

I have been since informed, "I desire to have no choice." "Do not weep for me," said she, "my dear aunt, but rather rejoice and praise on my account."

We asked her if she would choose a text for her own funeral sermon.

She readily mentioned, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." "That," said she, "has been my experience; my afflictions have been many, but not one too many; nor has the greatest of them all been too great; I praise him for them all." But after a pause, she said, "Stay, I think there is another text which may do better; let it be, 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord;' THAT is my experience NOW." She likewise chose a hymn to be sung after the sermon.

"In vain my fancy strives to paint
The moment after death;
The glories that surround a saint
When yielding up his breath.

One gentle sigh his fetters breaks,
We scarce can say, 'He's gone!'
Before the willing spirit takes
Its mansion near the throne.

Faith strives, but all its efforts fail,
To trace the spirit's flight;
No eye can pierce within the vail
Which hides the world of light.

Thus much (and this is all) we know,
Saints are completely blest;
Have done with sin, and care, and woe,
And with their Saviour rest:

On harps of gold they praise his name,
His face they always view;
Then let us followers be of them,
That we may praise him too."

But I must check myself, and set down but a small part of the gracious words which the Lord enabled her to speak in the course of the day, though she was frequently interrupted by pains and agonies.

She had something to say, either in a way of admonition or consolation, as she thought most suitable, to every one she saw.

To her most constant attendant she said, "Be sure you continue to call on the Lord; and if you think he does not hear you now, he will at last, as he has heard me."

She spoke a great deal to an intimate friend, who was with her every day, which I hope she will long remember, as the testimony of her dying Eliza. Among other things, she said, "See how comfortable the Lord can make a dying bed! Do you think that you shall have such an assurance when you come to die?"

Being answered, "I hope so, my dear;" she replied,

"But do you earnestly, and with all your heart, pray to the Lord for it? If you seek him, you shall surely find him." She then prayed affectionately and fervently for her friend, afterwards for her cousin, and then for another of our family who was present. Her prayer was not long, but every word was weighty, and her manner was very affecting. The purport was, that they might all be taught and comforted by the Lord.

About five in the afternoon, she desired me to pray with her once more. Surely I then prayed from my heart.

When I had finished, she said, "Amen."

I said, "My dear child, have I expressed your meaning?"

She answered, "O, yes!" and then added, "I am ready to say, Why are his chariot wheels so long in coming? But I hope he will enable me to wait his hour with patience."

These were the last words I heard her speak.

Mrs. Newton's heart was much, perhaps too much, attached to this dear child; which is not to be wondered at, considering what sort of a child she was, and how long and how much she had suffered. But the Lord was pleased graciously to support her in this trying season. Indeed, there was more cause for joy than for grief; yet the pain of separation will be felt. Eliza well knew her feelings, and a concern for her was, I believe, the last anxiety that remained with her. She said to those about her, "Try to persuade my aunt to leave the room; I think I shall soon go to sleep; I shall not remain with you till the morning." Her aunt, however, was the last person who heard her speak, and was sitting by her bed when she went away.

A little after six, hearing that a relation who dearly loved her, and was beloved by her, who had come daily from Westminster to see her, was below stairs, she said, "Raise me up, that I may speak to him once more."

Her aunt said, "My dear, you are nearly exhausted, I think you had better not attempt it."

She smiled, and said, "It is very well, I will not."

She was then within half an hour of her translation to glory; but the love of her dear Lord had so filled her with benevolence, that she was ready to exert herself to her last breath, in hope of saying something that might be useful to others after she was gone.

Towards seven o'clock, I was walking in the garden, and earnestly engaged in prayer for her, when a servant came to me and said, "She is gone." O Lord, how great is thy power! how great is thy goodness! A few days before, had it been practicable and lawful, what would I not have given to procure her recovery? Yet seldom in my life have I known a more heartfelt joy than when these words, *She is gone*, sounded in my ears. I ran up stairs,

and our whole little family was soon around her bed. Though her aunt and another person were sitting with their eyes fixed upon her, she was gone perhaps a few minutes before she was missed. She lay upon her left side, with her cheek gently reclining upon her hand, as if in a sweet sleep; and I thought there was a smile upon her countenance. Never, surely, did death appear in a more beautiful, inviting form. We fell upon our knees, and I returned, I think I may say, my most unfeigned thanks to our God and Saviour, for his abundant goodness to her, crowned in this last instance, by giving her so gentle a dismission. Yes, I am satisfied; I am comforted. And if one of the many involuntary tears I have shed, could have recalled her to life, to health, to an assemblage of all that this world could contribute to her happiness, I would have labored hard to suppress it. Now my largest desires for her are accomplished. The days of her mourning are ended. She is landed on that peaceful shore where the storms of trouble never blow. She is for ever out of the reach of sorrow, sin, temptation, and snares. Now is she before the throne; she sees Him, whom not having seen, she loved; she drinks of the rivers of pleasure which are at his right hand, and shall thirst no more.

She was born February 6, 1771.

She breathed her spirit into her Redeemer's hands a little before seven in the evening, on October 6, 1785, aged fourteen years and eight months.

I shall be glad if this little narrative may prove an encouragement to Christians who have children. May we not conceive the Lord saying to us, as Pharaoh's daughter said to the mother of Moses, "Take this child, and bring it up for me, and I will pay thee thy wages?" How solemn

the trust! important and difficult the charge of it! but how rich the reward, if our endeavors are crowned with success! And we have every thing to hope from his power and goodness, if, in dependence upon his blessing, we can fully and diligently aim at fulfilling his will. Happy they, who shall say at the last day, "Behold, here am I, and the children which thou hast given me!"

Many children will likewise see this narrative. May it convince them that it is practicable and good to seek the Lord betimes! My dear Eliza's state of languor prevented her from associating with young people of her own age so frequently and freely as she might otherwise have done. But these papers will come into the hands of such. To them I particularly recommend and dedicate this relation. Oh, my dear young friends, had you seen with what dignity of spirit she filled up the last scene of her life, you must have been affected by it! Let not the liveliness of your spirits, and the gayety of the prospect around you, prevent you from considering, that to you likewise, days will certainly come, unless you are suddenly snatched out of life, when you will say and feel that the world, and all in it, can afford you no pleasure. But there is a Saviour, Jesus Christ, a Mighty One, always near, always gracious to those who seek him. May you, like her, be enabled to choose him as the Guide of your youth, and the Lord of your hearts. Then, like her, you will find support and comfort under affliction, wisdom to direct your conduct, a good hope in death, and by death a happy translation to everlasting life.

I have only to add my prayers that a blessing from on high may descend upon the persons and families of all my friends, and upon all into whose hands this paper may providentially come. JOHN NEWTON.

No. 84.

ON

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

BY REV HENRY GROVE

And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.—Luke 22 : 15.

The principal design of the Lord's Supper is, to be a perpetual commemoration of the death of Christ. "This do in remembrance of me." "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." We have then no better way to acquire a proper notion of this ordinance, than by obtaining correct views of THE NATURE AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF CHRIST'S DEATH. Not to dwell now on the death of Christ as he was the noblest martyr to the truth, or as our example, we remark,

1. The death of Christ is to be viewed *as an exhibition of love*. It is an observation of our Lord, that "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;" "but God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," that we who had been enemies might be reconciled to God by the death of his Son. We see the greatness of this love, in the dignity of the person who suffered, and his nearness to God—he being the "only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father:" in the greatness of the sufferings voluntarily submitted to by him—he suffered death, even the ignominious death of the cross: in the great unworthiness of those for whom he suffered—sinners and enemies to God by sin: and finally, in the greatness of the benefit which he procured—eternal life.

To perpetuate the memory of his dying love, our Saviour instituted this Supper, to be observed until his second coming. Such a friend to souls ought never to be forgotten, and never will be, so long as there is a church on earth; and we have reason to believe that this ordinance, which, like a pillar, bears his name inscribed upon it, will prove a principal means of preserving a lively memory of him. This, then, is one view which we are to take of the Lord's Supper: it is the means appointed to perpetuate the memory of Christ's dying love, and of the love of God, manifested in his death. And oh, let the remembrance of his death never perish! Let our love, inflamed and strengthened by this holy ordinance, keep alive the memory of his. We deserve to be eternally forgotten of God, if we can forget our Redeemer.

But it is the commandment of God, "that he who loveth God, love his brother also." The same is Christ's "new commandment" to his disciples. "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another: as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." We have all a better

claim to one another's love, than any of us can pretend to have had to the love of God. We shall prove ourselves doubly unworthy of his love, if we fail of making so reasonable a return for it, as that of brotherly affection. But how is our love for the brethren to show itself? In a readiness to bear their burdens, to relieve their necessities, and to discharge every other office of kindness to them; nay, if occasion be, in laying down our lives for them.

"Thy love, O my Saviour, constraineth me to all this, because I thus judge, that thou didst die for me, that I should not live to myself, but to thee. And what am I to understand by living to thee, but doing those things which will be most acceptable to thee, and most serviceable to thy cause in the world? what, but my so living, that the world may receive some of those advantages from my example, which they would, in a much higher degree, from thine, if thyself wert upon earth: that thy Spirit, breathing and acting in me, may, in some little measure, supply thy personal absence?"

2. The death of Christ is to be viewed as *an expiatory sacrifice*. We may here say, as did our Lord's forerunner, when he pointed him out to the Jews, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" "But now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree." Christ's death having thus the nature of an expiatory sacrifice, we may regard the Lord's Supper as a commemorative representation of this sacrifice, and as a feast upon it.

The Lord's Supper is *a commemorative representation of the sacrifice* which Christ made of himself on the cross. This is the language of the institution itself. From that we learn, that "the bread we eat, is the body of Christ, which was given for us; and that the cup we drink, is the blood of Christ, which was shed for us." The death of Christ was a

propitiatory sacrifice; and, as such, it is commemorated in the ordinance of the Supper. The Lord's Supper is a representation of this sacrifice—faint, indeed, but significant. Every time the believer receives the consecrated elements, he does, as it were, lay his hands upon the sacrifice represented by them, and plead with God, in virtue of it, for pardon and acceptance; thus uniting his prayers, and all that he does in the service of God, to the intercession of the great High Priest, who is passed into the heavens.

There are two things which we are especially taught by the representation of Christ's sacrifice in the Supper: the great evil of sin, and the willingness of God to pardon it. We see the evil of sin in the sufferings of other men, and feel it in our own; but all the infelicities of human life, and death reigning from Adam to the last of his posterity, do not afford so convincing and affecting an evidence of the evil of sin, as do the sufferings and death of the Son of God.

"Must he, who is styled *the Son of God*, to denote his dignity, and *the Lamb of God*, to signify his innocence, die to expiate the guilt of sin? How enormous must be that guilt! And why am I to take occasion, from the dreadful sufferings of my Saviour, to reflect on the evil of sin, but that I may be excited to hate it, and to resolve and watch against it? Such, I am sensible, is the end designed. I do therefore renounce all league and friendship with sin, and, out of love to Jesus, resolve to seek its utter destruction. Great is my encouragement to do this; for, in the ordinance before me, I find the strongest proof that God is ready to forgive all sin. Christ died as a sacrifice. If the sacrifice was not accepted, why is this perpetual memorial of it? If it was insufficient, why is there not a repetition of the sacrifice itself, instead of its representation? Without controversy, God is in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and is actually reconciled to all that repent and believe."

The Lord's Supper is *a feast upon a sacrifice*. It is called

a feast, in allusion to the Jewish Passover; "for even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." As the Jews feasted upon the paschal lamb, after it had first been presented to God, so do we, sacramentally and by faith, upon Christ. This view of the ordinance suggests several things of importance.

As a feast, it is expressive of the communion of saints. Eating and drinking together was ever reckoned among the ancients a mark of friendship, and a means of perpetuating it; especially if a feast was prepared for this very end: for, as one observes, it amounted to a mutual promise of the parties to live together in peace and unity. Of all the external aids to Christian love, there is none of such efficacy as the holy communion. It is recorded of the primitive disciples, that "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread." "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one soul." If they who are of the same family, and eat at the same table, cannot live together in friendship, their temper must be unhappy indeed. If they who, by joining in the same ordinances, and receiving the same Spirit, are incorporated into one mystical body, and united to one head, cannot maintain a tolerable harmony among themselves, we should never wonder at dissension among others.

The Lord's Supper being a feast upon a sacrifice, *we have fellowship in it with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* The temple, under the law, was the house of God; the altar, his table; and the sacrifices brought to be offered there, no longer the offerer's, but the provisions of God's house; and were therefore called the bread of God. When the offerer was allowed to partake of his own sacrifice, he was to look upon himself as God's guest. And is not every Christian church, in some sense, the Lord's house? Is not the communion table, the table of the Lord? and what is provided, the "Lord's Supper?"

"Think, then, O my soul, of the honor to which thou art raised; that the Lord Jesus is Master of the feast, and that God himself vouchsafes his presence, and bids every worthy receiver welcome to the entertainments of his house! This is something more than to be a guest at the table of the greatest person upon earth. Thou art as truly the guest of God, though not entertained with the same magnificence, as they are whom he hath advanced to dwell in his heavenly palace."

Since such is the nature of this ordinance, that the "bread which we break, is the communion of the body of Christ; and the cup of blessing which we bless, is the communion of the blood of Christ;" what manner of persons ought communicants to be, in all purity of heart and life, who are received into immediate converse with the holy God, and with his Son Jesus Christ, the image of his holiness! "What communion hath light with darkness?" "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

The Lord's Supper being a feast upon a sacrifice, we should consider it as *a solemn form of renewing our covenant with God, and as a means of our participating in the blessings of the covenant.* The book of the law, containing the promises of God to Israel, and the terms on which they would be fulfilled, is, on this account, called "the book of the covenant." When this book was read in the hearing of the people, who promised, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient," beasts were offered in sacrifice, and their blood was sprinkled upon the people, to denote the solemn ratification of God's covenant with them. This blood was denominated the blood of the covenant. In like manner, the Gospel being God's new covenant with all those who believe

in Jesus, the New Testament, in which the Gospel is recorded, may very properly be styled "the book of the covenant." The blood of Christ, by which this covenant was confirmed, is expressly called "the blood of the covenant." The covenant of grace has respect to the sacrifice of the cross, as its foundation. And since, in the Lord's Supper, we both sacramentally and spiritually partake of this sacrifice, it naturally suggests the thought of renewing our covenant with God, and the dedication of ourselves to him.

The first time of our approaching the Lord's table may, on some accounts, be deemed the most solemn; as we then first communicate in the memorials of our Saviour's body and blood; and, by these sacred symbols, confirm and solemnize our dedication to God; but we renew this dedication or covenant every time we receive the holy communion.

The soul by faith may hear God speaking to it, in some such manner as this: "Come hither, O thou whom I love! I do here promise, upon the body and blood of my Son, to be thy God, to do for thee whatever is implied in this relation: let this body and blood be witness between me and thee, for the performance of my promise."

"With all humility and grateful joy," replies the soul, "do I accept thy offer, O most merciful God, and, on the same pledges, I promise to be thine. Taking thee, O Father Almighty, for my God, my Father, and my everlasting portion; thee, O Son of God, for my all-sufficient Redeemer and advocate; and thee, O blessed Spirit, for my sanctifier and guide, my helper and comforter: I would 'present myself a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is my reasonable service.' I take the precepts of the Gospel for the rule of my actions, and rely on its promises as the immovable foundation of my hopes. I resign myself to thy disposal, acknowledge myself bound to live to thy glory, and promise, by thy grace assisting me, to be obedient and

faithful unto death. This is not the first time I have thus covenanted, but now I cheerfully renew the engagement, being sensible that I cannot be bound too fast. I have continual fear of breaking away and being driven far off from thee. I do therefore, again, upon the body and blood of Christ, swear to be obedient and faithful. Lord! thou art witness to my oath, be thou my help."

Can any thing be more solemn and binding than a covenant so transacted?

It follows, that the Lord's Supper is a means of our participating in the benefits of the covenant: such as peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, strength of grace, and more overflowing hopes of future blessedness. No ordinance is better fitted to kindle devout affections than this; in which we have the Prince of life crucified before our eyes, suffering, bleeding, groaning, and dying, to save us and destroy sin. Such a representation is fitted to excite all the tender emotions of the heart, and, at the same time, to engage the concurrence of the understanding. Our affections can never be so highly excited by this ordinance, that our reason will not approve it. It may be added, that receiving the sacrament being, with the sincere Christian, an act of obedience and love, both to God and the Saviour, he may warrantably expect a reward. He communes because he delights in performing his duty: and will not God bestow some marks of his special favor upon his willing servant?

"Surely, O my soul, this eating and drinking were not ordained to be an empty ceremony! The thing signified, is thy feeding by faith on the body and blood of Christ. This thou doest indeed at other times, but more particularly now, when thy faith in a crucified Saviour is exercised in view of the memorials of his death. He that gave himself for thee on the cross, and who now offers himself to thee in the ordinance of the Supper, can withhold nothing from thee."

Does not the very occasion seem to justify our expectation of partaking in "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost?" What time so proper to receive these blessings, as when we are receiving the pledges of them, and renewing his covenant in which they are promised? Where should our King bestow the gifts which he has received for men, if not at his own table?

3. The death of Christ is to be viewed as *a victory over death*. "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." The wisdom of God is remarkably seen, in defeating the malice of wicked men and apostate spirits by the very means which they employ to bring to pass their evil devices. How great was Satan's triumph, when, having put it into the heart of Judas to betray Christ, and pushed on the Jews and Romans to crucify him, he saw the dreadful deed accomplished! Little did he imagine that his success, in this instance, would prove the fatal blow to his empire. Christ had overcome the devil in "the wilderness;" but on the cross his victory was rendered more complete, by the influence of his death to destroy sin, and to abolish death, the effect of sin.

Many have conquered *at* their death; but here is one who conquered *by dying*—not a common enemy, but the universal and last enemy of mankind, even death itself! He was born that he might die, and he died to rise again. "It is appointed unto men once to die;" but Christ died to destroy that death which passeth upon all men, by obtaining a resurrection for all men; and for all that do good, a resurrection to life eternal. Let us then think of our dying Lord, when we show his death in the Supper, as vanquishing, not as vanquished. Let his death be considered as the purchase of our immortality, and his resurrection as the pledge and assurance of it.

"Why should I fear to die? Hath not my Saviour tasted of the same bitter cup? And was not his death soon followed by his resurrection? In like manner, though I die, I shall live again, because Christ liveth. I have the same certainty that I shall rise in the last day, as I have that my Redeemer is already risen; and that I shall rise to dwell with him *hereafter*, as that I live and die to him now. While, therefore, I commemorate the death of my Redeemer, I will celebrate his conquest over death, and comfort myself with the prospect of the triumph of all his members over it at the last day. 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord.'"

We may consider the death of Christ as the ground of his exaltation. Because "he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," therefore "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." The world is subjected to his authority; and all must acknowledge it, by a voluntary obedience.

From the humiliation of Christ, which is the thing first presented to us in the memorials of his death, let us pass, in our thoughts, to the exaltation that followed. He first suffered, and then entered into glory. I am hence taught, that I am to gain the favor of God, not by extolling the obedience and resignation of his Son, while I indulge a fretful and repining temper: not by trusting to Christ's righteousness, while I am without the love of righteousness, and a stranger to its practice. I may not indulge the thought, that I can rise otherwise than my Saviour did: that without imitating him in his hatred of iniquity, I can receive the

same marks of his favor as they who do thus imitate him: that a part of the glory obtained by his obedience, can descend on one who is wilfully disobedient. Let these considerations teach me the necessity of holiness, and animate my endeavors to acquire the highest measure of it; for in the same degree as I approach my Saviour in holiness now, I shall approach him in glory hereafter.

4. The death of Christ is to be viewed *in its relation to his second appearance.* "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death *till he come.*" As "he was once offered to bear the sins of many;" so, "unto them that look for him, shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." We believe that Christ died; and to publish this belief, we show his death in this ordinance. We also believe that he rose from the dead, ascended to heaven, and that he will thence descend, in the same manner as he ascended: to testify this belief, we show his death *till he come.* The ordinance has a double aspect. It is both a thankful commemoration of our Saviour's death, and a joyful pledge of his second advent. In view of this advent, every friend of Christ should be ready to exclaim, in the ecstasy of his soul, "'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.' In this mystery I see thee darkly as through a glass: O when shall I behold thee, face to face? When will this Sun of righteousness break through every intervening cloud, that I may see him in all his glory? These indistinct and distant views are refreshing; how great, then, will be the pleasure of being 'absent from the body, and present with the Lord!' when I shall put on my glorified body, and with many thousand times ten thousand of his saints, that have lived upon earth, shall ascend to meet him in the air; when I shall be publicly absolved and acknowledged by him, and by him presented holy and without blame to God, even our Father! What will be my transports, when I shall see my Saviour arrayed in majesty and love, and fall worshipping at his feet!"

Did this sacred ordinance only lead us back to the death of Christ, it would afford but a melancholy entertainment. We should have no object before us but such as would feed our sorrow. But, blessed be God, it carries our thoughts, from the death of Christ, forward to the day when he will be revealed in the glory of his Father, and of his holy angels. Thine eye, O Christian, shall behold him; thine, and not another's! Thy Saviour died, but he has not ceased to be; he ever liveth to govern the world, and intercede for his church—he is gone, but he will return again.

"Is it really so, that I love the appearance of Christ, and am persuaded that what the Scriptures say concerning the circumstances and consequences of his appearance, will certainly take place? What manner of person ought I to be! Is it one end of my partaking of the Lord's Supper, to declare my belief of Christ's coming to judge the world and to be glorified in his saints? This should remind me to prepare for his coming, to live with a constant regard to the *great day*, that I may be able to give up my account with joy. Let me watch, for I know not the hour when my Lord will come. Let me never forget, that such as I am at the time of my death, I shall be found in judgment; and that I shall probably die as I have lived."

These thoughts suggest some practical reflections.

1. *The principal use of the Lord's Supper is, to promote true godliness in the hearts and lives of believers.* This is the noblest end that can be accomplished in believers; being inseparably connected with the honor of God and their own felicity. Perhaps no one ordinance advances this end so effectually, as the Lord's Supper. It not only puts us in mind of our duty, but also presents us powerful motives to its performance. The allurements of example, the demands of love, the amiableness of the divine character, the rewards of holiness, and the punishment of sin, are all presented in

this one ordinance. It exhibits a summary of the helps which God has afforded us in our way to heaven. Whoever does not take this view of it, but rests in the present action merely, is greatly deceived. We cannot too carefully avoid splitting on this rock. Partaking of the Lord's Supper is, after all, no more than a means of promoting our piety; and not to be compared with the power of Christianity in the heart, and the substantial virtues of a good life. These are of indispensable necessity and eternal excellence.

We are hence enabled to ascertain what characters have a right to come to the Lord's table. He who has in some measure attained to that temper and conduct which this ordinance was intended to advance, possesses the qualifications of a worthy communicant. He has faith, and hope, and charity; he is humble and penitent; loves his Saviour supremely; makes conscience of every known duty, and flies every known sin. He is not indeed perfect in these respects, but he should not therefore abstain from the Lord's Supper; since, by devoutly partaking of it, he may hope to gain assistance in going on to perfection.

But perhaps there are some who think more is requisite; who view the consequence of communing unworthily, as being so dreadful, that nothing short of an uncommon degree of piety, or, at least, an *assurance* of our being truly pious, will justify our coming to the Lord's table. But if true piety, and not any particular degree of it, is the condition of salvation, it is unreasonable to suppose that something further is required to commemorate the death of our Saviour. If all who are not absolutely *assured* of their piety were to absent themselves from the supper, very few would partake of it. Let us not indulge unnecessary fears. Nothing, either in the nature or the design of this ordinance, need deter any real Christian from complying with the command to celebrate it. On the contrary, every thing invites his compliance; its nature being that of a religious feast, and

its design, to preserve the memory of a Friend and Benefactor.

The passage in the eleventh chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, which has given birth to so many fears on this subject, was directed against those who partook of the Lord's Supper in a manner so irreverent, that they might very well be said "not to discern the Lord's body." They did not even observe that decorum and sobriety at the Lord's table, which become Christians at their own. The apostle does indeed say, that he "that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body;" but let the apostle himself inform us, what he means by *eating and drinking unworthily*, and by the *damnation* thus incurred. The irregularities which occasioned this part of the epistle, will explain the former; and the evils inflicted in consequence of these irregularities, the latter. "For this cause," says the apostle, "many among you are weak and sickly, and many sleep." It seems, then, that bodily disorders, sickness, and death, were the *damnation* or judgment to which he referred, and that it was not future and eternal punishment. It is added, that they "were judged or chastened of the Lord, that they might not be condemned with the world." Their being "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord," therefore, means their showing such disrespect to the ordinance of Christ's body and blood, as would expose them to the effects of God's displeasure.

2. From what has been said, we may be enabled to satisfy ourselves respecting *the preparation necessary to every particular communion*. Do I possess a disposition of mind proper for this sacred action? Have I clean hands and a pure heart? Am I laboring under no disorders of body or mind, which incapacitate me for attending upon this ordinance without distraction? I ought not, then, to neglect any present opportunity to celebrate it. I may not, perhaps,

have spent the usual time in preparatory exercises of devotion; but if it has been through no fault of mine—if I find myself, notwithstanding, so much disposed for the ordinary worship of God, as to be able to compose my thoughts and to raise my affections to him, I am not to suppose myself forbidden to approach the Lord's table.

Do I find much time required to empty my heart of worldly affections? I have reason to fear that I love the world inordinately, or am too much involved in its cares. I must renounce that attachment to the world which renders it difficult for me to retire and converse with God. I must cultivate an habitually pious frame of mind, so that I may not be obliged to have recourse to certain extraordinary acts of meditation, prayer, and humiliation, at the approach of every communion; and to lay upon them the main stress of my preparation at least, if not of my religion. They who do so, ought to inquire, whether there is not something of superstition in this, which adds neither to the comfort nor the credit of their religion.

It is by no means my desire to discourage due preparation for celebrating this ordinance: on the contrary, I shall offer a few things to assist communicants in making such preparation.

They who expect to approach the Lord's table, should particularly examine whether, in respect to the habitual temper of their minds, and tenor of their lives, they go backward or forward in religion. They should be thankful for every victory they may have been enabled to gain over themselves and the world, for any progress they have made in the divine life. They should, at the same time, humble themselves for their many defects; that their conduct has been no more conformed to the example and precepts of Christ; that they are no more steadily and powerfully influenced by his love. They should inquire, whether there be not some part of their practice which neither agrees

with the rules of their Christian profession, nor with other parts of their character; whether they have not lived in some hurtful indulgence, or neglected some spiritual gift. "In all things" must they strive "to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour."

They should especially select those subjects for meditation, which tend most to weaken their attachment to the world; to unite their hearts to God and his Son Jesus Christ; and to elevate their views of the character, the necessity, the beauty, and the advantages of true religion: subjects which will warm their hearts with gratitude and zeal, render sin more hateful, and perfection in holiness more desirable. Such meditations will have the happiest tendency to awaken their minds when drowsy, and to cheer them when drooping; by which means they will approach the Lord's table with equal care and satisfaction.

3. The preceding thoughts may inform us *what it is to commune worthily*. As they are the most worthy communicants who have most of Christ's spirit within them, so that is the most worthy manner of communing which flows most from his Spirit. It consists not so much in rapturous flights of the imagination, and strong workings of the passions, as in a clear discernment of the spiritual import of the ordinance, and a lively sense of the benefits resulting from it. Am I affected by the representation of Christ's sufferings much in the same manner as I am by the recital of a sad story? Does the impression wear away like that of a tale that is told? However much I may flatter myself, these are less the operations of grace than of nature. The Christian who is assisted by this ordinance to see the great evil of sin, and the love of Jesus in delivering him from it; to feel the many motives it exhibits to holiness of heart and life, so as to have his pious resolutions established, his tenderness of conscience increased, and all his actions brought more under the influence of the doctrines and precepts of Christian-

ity; is he who communes most worthily, whether he has or has not the happiness of warm affections.

Finally, we are hence taught the advantage of frequent communions. The advantage is, that frequent communions promote our progress in the Christian life: the objection is, that the frequency of communions destroys their solemnity. But I apprehend that the objector deceives himself with a wrong notion of solemnity. Is it meant that communicants will not approach the Supper with the same unaccountable awe and dread upon their minds? What then, if they are but serious and devout? We should think it very absurd for any to adopt the resolution, not to worship God in their families during the week, lest they should destroy the solemnity of his worship in his own house, and on his own day. The cases are not very dissimilar. An habitual seriousness and fervor of spirit, is, in the nature of things, to be expected from the frequent returns of holy duties, not from long intermissions of them; and the more habitually serious we are, the better shall we be prepared to wait upon God in every ordinance.

Having explained the nature and design of the Lord's Supper, and offered a few things by way of reflection, I would next turn your thoughts to THE OBLIGATION OF CHRISTIANS TO OBSERVE THIS ORDINANCE.

1. Consider that *the command is express:* "This do in remembrance of me." The sacrifice of Christ being intended alike for the benefit of all ages, and the covenant it confirms extending to all, the institution of the Supper, which was designed to lead the thoughts of Christians to this sacrifice, must equally respect all. Accordingly, the apostles were commanded to observe it *in remembrance* of Christ, that is, after his death, thus to keep up the remembrance of him in the world. Paul says to the Corinthians, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the

Lord's death till he come." But in what way could the disciples be said to show, or represent the death of Christ, in this ordinance, till his *coming*, if they only of the first ages were to observe it? The words manifestly imply, that as Christ would always have a church on earth, so it would be the duty of its members to commemorate his death till he should appear the *second time*, and *receive them to himself*.

The Gospel being divine, all its precepts come from God, are the result of his wisdom, and have the stamp of his authority. The language of voluntary disobedience to them is, "I regard neither the wisdom nor the authority of God." This language is as really implied in the violation of those precepts which respect the Lord's Supper, as of any other in the Gospel.

It therefore becomes those who absent themselves from the Lord's table, to take this matter into serious consideration. Are they indeed careless about receiving the holy communion? Do they go on, year after year, without once inquiring whether there be a command respecting it, or one which they are bound to observe? Have they no solicitude to recommend themselves to God, by walking in all his statutes and ordinances blameless? If this be not wilful disobedience, it has much of the same character and guilt. It cannot be supposed that any sincere Christian will pay so little respect to the commands of Jehovah.

2. Consider *the person who is the immediate Author of this command, and in memory of whom the Supper was instituted.* It is no other than *Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour,* one to whom we acknowledge ourselves infinitely indebted, and for whom we profess to have the greatest regard. We have the greatest reason for this acknowledgment, for he has given the most extraordinary proofs of his concern for our happiness. Though he was "in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God," yet, to procure our salvation, "he humbled himself, and became

obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." As there never was sorrow like unto his sorrow, so there never was love like unto his love. Love demands love; the love of the Redeemer demands the love of the redeemed.

Hath Christ loved us and given himself to die for us? And do we really love him? We shall then be desirous of doing every thing necessary to prove the reality of our love, and the high sense we entertain of the unexampled greatness of his. Himself has said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Among these commandments is one which requires us to commemorate his death in the ordinance of the Supper: and what adds very much to our obligations to do this, is, that he is not only the author, but the object of this institution. It refers immediately to him, was appointed in honor of him, and is consecrated to his memory. This being the case, every friend of Christ must heartily approve of it, and strive to promote its observance.

3. Consider *the character of this institution.* It is a distinguished ordinance of the Gospel; exceedingly intelligible; easy to be performed; and greatly to our advantage.

It is a distinguished ordinance of the Gospel. It is a permanent duty of every Christian society, a visible mark of our being Christ's disciples. Each communicant, in receiving the bread and wine, publicly avows Christ to be his Lord and Master, and glories in that cross which was "to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness." The language of his conduct is, "I own myself a disciple of Christ, I rejoice in being so, and am resolved to make his Gospel the rule of my actions."

The celebration of the Lord's Supper being so considerable a part of the worship of Christians, and one in which they declare themselves the disciples of Christ, how extraordinary is it, that any should have so little respect for this ordinance, as to live and die in the neglect of it! Would not these same persons esteem a church or community of

Christians very imperfect, where the Lord's Supper was never administered? Are they not, then, very imperfect Christians, who, having constant opportunities of attending upon this Gospel institution, persevere in neglecting it? Surely, out of their own mouth will they be condemned.

Another circumstance which renders the neglect of this ordinance more criminal, is, *its being exceedingly intelligible.* The Scriptures teach us, that it has the nature of a religious feast, and is observed in memory of Jesus Christ. We are, while eating *this bread* and drinking *this cup*, to think of him, as bearing the punishment of our sins in his body on the cross, and shedding his blood for their remission. What the Scriptures thus teach respecting the relation which the Lord's Supper has to Christ, is easily understood.

It is as easy for an ingenuous and devout mind to practise this duty, as to understand the nature and design of it. The outward action is merely partaking of bread and wine, in memory of our best Friend. Is the command which required this so hard, that any Christian should find difficulty in complying with it? Shall we deny Christ so small a thing as that of setting apart some time, that we may together celebrate his death by this rite? He has not permitted the heavy yoke of Jewish ceremonies to come upon the neck of his disciples. In the place of these, the very number of which would have made them grievous, our Lord has substituted but this one institution of a ceremonial nature, to be observed by us, after our admission into his church. This, in respect to the outward action, is so inconsiderable, that were it to return much oftener than it does in most societies, we might well submit to it, out of thankfulness for being delivered from the bondage of the former dispensation. It has, indeed, an inward as well as an outward part; but the inward part consists of those exercises of devotion, which no pious person will consider unreasonable, since they are productive of the most rational delight.

This ordinance is *greatly to our advantage*. It is as much our privilege as our duty to eat and drink at the Lord's table. I have already shown that this eating and drinking is expressive of a great privilege enjoyed by the worthy communicant: namely, the friendship of God, together with all the benefits which flow from it. Such a privilege must certainly enhance our obligations both to receive the Lord's Supper, and to walk worthy of it afterwards.

This ordinance is also of special advantage to promote a lively and devout remembrance of Christ, and by this means to invigorate our holy affections and assist our progress in all virtue. That the remembrance of Christ by those who love him has naturally this effect, will not be questioned. Their love to Christ must be very much increased by the representation of his; and the increase of their love be attended by greater desires to obey his will.

Another circumstance which recommends this ordinance is, its peculiar tendency to unite the hearts of Christians in brotherly kindness and charity. To have the same Master, the same Redeemer, the same sacred symbols by which to declare their common zeal for him, their common interest in him, and their common relations to each other, must be to Christians a powerful incentive to dwell together in unity, and to promote each other's welfare. The pleasure which rewards the conscientious observance of this ordinance serves also to strengthen our resolutions, animate our zeal, and render the practice of all other duties more delightful. Partaking of the Lord's Supper having these advantages, the obligation to do it must be answerable; for the greater the motive to any duty, the more inexcusable is its neglect. Let this excite both non-communicants and communicants to reflect seriously on the subject. Have I the prospect—should the non-communicant say—if I partake worthily, of receiving so great advantages, and shall I not be persuaded to do it? Since it is my happiness to partake of the memorials of

Christ's body and blood—should the communicant say—I am resolved to walk so as to please my Lord and Master, to adorn his doctrines, and contribute, in my little sphere, to make the world entertain higher thoughts of him and his disciples.

DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES,

WHILE RECEIVING THE LORD'S SUPPER.

O my soul, the happy, the wished-for time is arrived, but it will quickly be gone. Lay hold of the opportunity, make the utmost of it, that when gone it may not be lost. Turn away thy eyes from beholding vanity, and look unto Jesus. Be all attention and reverence; let thy thoughts be united and elevated, every power engaged, and all thy affections present to wait on thy Lord at his table.

O thou, who alone knowest the hearts of all men, and alone hast them in thy power, the almighty and omnipotent God, help thou my infirmities; fix my mind, prone else to wander; cause every good seed which thy hand hath sown to spring up; perfect thy own work; speak peace to my soul; bid every vain and every tumultuous passion be still. The sacrifice is ready; send down the sacred fire, and help me, in the same act, to honor the Father and the Son, that I may have fellowship with both.

"Behold," my soul, "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!" Rightly is he called a *Lamb*, whose innocence was spotless, whose meekness and patience were invincible; and the Lamb of God, for his superior excellence and dignity, and his being chosen to this office by the Father. "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." Neither guile nor complaint was found in his mouth, much less cursing and bitterness. Dost thou pro-

fess thyself a follower of the Lamb, and glory in the title? Learn then of him to be harmless and blameless, meek and lowly in heart, alike averse to doing or deserving evil, but ready to suffer it.

But how does the Lamb of God take away sin? By bearing it in his own body on the tree. He was wounded for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him. O heavy load, which sunk the Son of God, in his body, to the grave; and, had it not been removed, would have sunk the world in ruin! Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.

Didst thou, O Jesus, with whom the most precious things, and the most excellent beings among creatures, are not once to be compared, didst thou give thy sacred self for me on the cross, and art thou ready to give thyself to me in the supper? I give, I consecrate myself, without the least reserve, to thee. I could wish I were more worthy of thy acceptance. But such as I have, I give unto thee; and I give it heartily, as unto the Lord, to whom I confess myself to owe more than I can give. O do thou make me more like thyself, shed more of thy beauty and loveliness upon me, sanctify me in every part, help me to be more perfect in every divine attainment, that I may be less unworthy of thee! Grant, O my Saviour, that I may be able to offer thee the sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart, which thou wilt not despise.

My blessed Saviour did not suffer in his body only. No, it was the least part of his sufferings that was visible; his soul was sorrowful even unto death, and labored under such an agony in the garden, that his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground; and he prayed, "Father, if it be possible, let this up pass from me." Nay, he was heard crying out on the cross, *My God, my God, why hast*

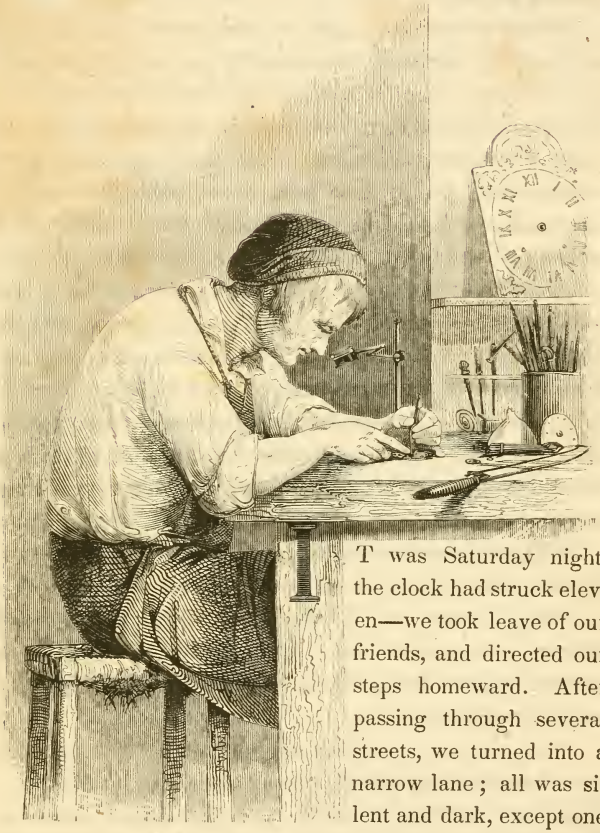
thou forsaken me? Strange language for the Son of God! Does God indeed forsake his own Son? the holy, the merciful God, forsake his innocent, his well-beloved Son? He does for a time, so as to withhold the usual light of his countenance, and to leave him in the hands of his enemies.

Was there ever sorrow like that of my Saviour's? Can any thing be imagined to exceed it? Yes, O my soul, though his sorrows were inconceivably great, his love was greater; for his love made him willing to pass through such a sea of sorrows; his love brought him to that dark hour, and supported him in it: love to the rebellious sons of men, love to thee, O my soul! Was ever love like his love? Is there any evil like the evil of sin, the guilty, the cursed occasion of all his sufferings? What ingratitude, O my soul, can be equal to thine, if, after what thy Redeemer has done and suffered for thee, thou wilt not be persuaded to break thy league with his enemies, thy sins?

Truly, O Lord, I am thy servant; I am thine by creation, thine by purchase, thine by covenant. I triumph in the relation, and acknowledge all the duties resulting from it. I have sworn, and cannot repent, that I will keep thy righteous statutes; and I now joyfully repeat the solemn engagement. Here I am; Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Do with me and mine as seemeth good in thy sight. It is thine to command and dispose, mine to obey and submit. Thou hast bought me with a price, even with the precious blood of thy own Son. I therefore present my whole self, body and soul, to thee, a living sacrifice, which is my reasonable service, with a full purpose of heart to glorify thee with them.

THE

WATCHMAKER AND HIS FAMILY.



T was Saturday night, the clock had struck eleven—we took leave of our friends, and directed our steps homeward. After passing through several streets, we turned into a narrow lane; all was silent and dark, except one low window. "There," said I, "perhaps some poor mechanic, already tired with the labor of the day, still endeavors to increase his trifling pittance."

"Let us stop and see," said my companion. It was not difficult, for the house was an old-fashioned structure, built when the level of the ground was considerably lower than at present; so that passengers easily saw what was passing within.

When we came opposite the window we saw a middle-aged man at his work-table, finishing one of the movements of a timepiece—his tool slipped, and the work was spoiled—he repeated the attempt, and again he was unsuccessful; a slight and momentary expression of trouble appeared on his countenance, but the cloud soon passed away; he clasped his hands and looked upwards, while his lips moved as if uttering a short and fervent prayer; the expression of trouble disappeared; he resumed his work. In a few minutes he looked at the hour, and seeing it was now midnight, laid aside his work. Then, removing the lamp to a table in another part of the room, took a book and began to read; presently he closed it, and kneeling down prayed earnestly; afterwards, resuming his seat, he was for a short time engaged in meditation, then taking up the lamp left the room.

"There goes one of your godly ones," said my companion, walking on; "I am sure he is one of that sort."

"May be so; but did you not observe his patience, although he repeatedly failed in his work? Did you mark the expression of his countenance? it indicated trouble, but not anger or vexation."

"Yes, it was a peculiar expression, very different from that of workmen in general when an accident befalls them. I could not but observe it—the man seems poor, but there is something very decent and even respectable about him; but what could be the reason why he left off without finishing the movement?"

"Did not you see it was twelve o'clock? The Lord's day—the day of rest from wordly care and employments, has begun."

"Well, this is being righteous overmuch; if he went to church as usual, surely it could be no matter whether he worked half an hour longer to finish what he was about or not; the man has to support his family. This is one of the mistakes about religion."

"I differ from you: I cannot blame the utmost strictness in endeavoring to do the will of God. Surely, no man can be righteous overmuch while doing as the Bible directs him."

"But what harm would it have been if this poor man had worked an hour or two longer? He must have some reason for being so late at his work: perhaps his wife or children are ill."

"He thinks that he ought to obey the commands of God before any thing else; and he is sure that God will not allow him to suffer for obeying his will."

"Then you suppose that he expects God will work some miracle to help him; for surely, if his work is not finished, he will not be paid for it. For my part, I should not understand a workman leaving a piece of work unfinished for any such fanatical notions; and if his master is of the same opinion, and should want the work to-morrow, what will become of him?"

"My friend, every thing in this world belongs to God; and let us remember, that he causes all things to work together for good to those who love him."

"All this may be very true, but I should like to know something more of this man. I think I will come this way to-morrow morning, and see what he is about. I shall call at your house in the afternoon."

SABBATH MORNING.

"Well," said I, "my friend, have you been looking after our poor watchmaker?"

"Yes, and I do not know what to make of him; there is something extraordinary in every thing he says and does; I never saw one like him before."

"Why, what has happened?"

"After we parted last night I thought a good deal about what we had seen. I rose early this morning, and was again at the house by six o'clock. I had hardly entered the dwelling when I heard the poor watchmaker singing. Now, thought I, I have found you at work; but I was mistaken: he was sitting with his children around him; a Bible lay open on the table, and they were singing the 103d Psalm. Next him sat a young girl about fourteen, her arm rested on his shoulder. Between his knees stood a child three or four years old, while another brother, some years older, completed the group. They sang in a most pleasing manner, and I heard another voice from the next room joining with them; what they sang evidently came from their hearts, and I must confess it went to mine."

"That is not surprising; but proceed."

"After they had sung, they knelt down and prayed. I was particularly struck with the prayer of the daughter; here it is; I wrote it down, and will read it to you. 'O, thou blessed Saviour, the friend of sinners, we call upon thee with our whole hearts, and may thy Holy Spirit teach us to pray aright. We lived without the knowledge or love of thee, and were always unhappy; but now, O Lord, we love thee, and delight to serve thee. Oh! be with us and bless us; especially, be with us this day; it is thine own day. Enable us to serve thee with all our hearts;

may we be attentive to thy word, and enable us to understand it. Bless our dear minister, who teaches us to know thee: O Lord, be with our dear mother; we entreat thee for her; thou canst take away her sickness, if it be thy will—(a voice from the next room added, 'But thy will be done')—yes, O Lord, thy will be done; may our dear father be spared to us, and may we all be good children. Amen.'

"'Now for breakfast,' said the father. 'Jenny, where is the milk?' The table was presently covered with four cups, half a loaf, and a jug of milk; they took their places, and the father asked a blessing."

"You have drawn an interesting picture indeed," said I. "Compare this humble meal with the sumptuous repasts of the world, and say in which of them is true happiness. A poor artisan entreats God to bless his humble fare, and eats with pleasure and without repining; while the irreligious and sensual man sits down to his crowded board without even thinking of the Almighty, who gives him all things richly to enjoy."

"The clock struck eight; 'Jenny, are you ready to repeat your chapter?' said the father. 'Yes, I learned it last night, and have looked over it again this morning.'—'Clement, are you ready?' 'I will look over it once more,' answered the boy, and sat down by the window.

"'My children, I hope you will be perfect in your catechism to-day; do not let me have the pain to hear you are wrong in your answers; your teacher will also be grieved; remember he told you once you were more ready at reading any thing than your Bible; don't let him have to say this again. Set a good example; let it not be said, the children who have been taught to know the Saviour are behind those who are ignorant of the truth. Jenny, which is best, to love the Saviour or to love the world?'

"'Ah, my dear father, would that I loved the Lord more than I do.'

"'Be of good cheer, my dear child, he who has begun in you a good work will complete it; he is faithful, he will support and strengthen you. Go and see if you can help your mother.'

KEEP HOLY THE SABBATH-DAY.

"At this moment a man came up the stairs; he was well dressed, but his countenance looked harsh and forbidding. He appeared quite out of humor, and throwing open the door, exclaimed, in an angry tone, 'Must I always be obliged to look after you in this way? have not you finished the work I gave you? I *must* have it this morning.'

"Frightened at his voice and manner, the boys ran and hid themselves in the next room. Jenny stood by the door. The watchmaker offered a chair to his master. 'Pooh! none of your ceremonies, where is your work?'

"'Sir, I am very sorry, but I have not been able quite to finish the timepiece. I worked till midnight, but I met with some accidents.'

"'Yes, that is always the way with you, always clumsy, and some paltry excuse or other: what state is it in?' He opened the case in which the timepiece was placed, and taking out a magnifying glass, examined the work. 'Well, very well indeed; so far good! Come, my good fellow, to your bench directly; you will finish it in two or three hours, and then your money will be ready.'

"'You forget, sir,' said the watchmaker, in a calm but firm tone, 'that this is the Sabbath, and I cannot ——'

"'Pooh! none of your nonsense; you are one of the saints, are you? I wish the whole pack of them at the

bottom of the sea. What harm can there be in working an hour or two? There will be plenty of time afterwards for two long sermons; besides, God never can wish you should starve.'

"'Sir, I will engage that the timepiece shall be at your house as early as you please to-morrow; I will set about it by one o'clock in the morning. You cannot send it off before noon, so there will be time enough to examine that it is properly finished.'

"'I did not ask for your opinion, but desired you would set about it directly; do you intend to do so or not?'

"The poor workman shut his box, saying, in a humble tone, 'Sir, I cannot work to-day.'

"'What a fool you are! I am sorry, for you are a clever hand, and I had intended to help you. If you lose my work it is your fault. Have you any thing else to do?'

"'No, I have not any work besides this.'

"'Well, then, take my advice, lay aside these nonsensical scruples: my religion allows me to attend to my business on Sunday morning.'

"'Mine, sir, does not.'

"'As much as to say, you are a great deal wiser than I am. If work is to be done, it must be done; besides, the Bible says that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath; what do you say to that?'

"'No doubt it is true; but man was created to serve the Lord with all his heart. It is a privilege and a pleasure to keep the Sabbath, and worship the Lord on his own day; it would be misery indeed to profane it, and surely his blessing would not be with my labor.'

"'Am I accursed? Are we all pagans and infidels because we do not go to your 'house of prayer,' as you call it? Depend upon it, this hypocritical nonsense will get

you into trouble. We must really see and do something with the people that make such a disturbance, and are so troublesome.'

"'Sir, surely you cannot mean that keeping the Lord's day holy is making a disturbance; please to remember, there are laws which expressly forbid us to follow our worldly callings on this day.'

"'I did not come here to be taught my duty; once for all, finish the work, or I must take it away.'

"'The Lord will provide, and may he forgive you for taking away work from a man with a large family and a sick wife, when there really is no reason for so doing.'

"'I do not take it away; you refuse to finish it. When you are come to your senses, perhaps I may find you work again.'

"This hard-hearted man then left the room—the watchmaker raised his eyes towards heaven and sat down. I came away not a little grieved and struck with what I saw and heard."

"I do not wonder at it," said I; "this master is indeed hard-hearted! Thus it is that, though there are some who conscientiously regard the Sabbath, the general profanation of this day has become a disgrace to our country, and a national sin: alas! we see it in every rank. The effect of bad example is great, and I believe workmen often employ this day in their usual labors, though not required by their employers; or perhaps they occupy themselves in some other sort of work; not to mention the idle and lounging manner in which thousands pass the day, and by which it is in reality as much profaned as by the hardest labor. Again, I fear persons who themselves would on no account break the Sabbath, often thoughtlessly compel others to do so; they go perhaps at the latter end of the week, and order

articles to be ready by Monday or Tuesday, without reflecting that their orders cannot be completed unless the poor workman labors hard the whole of the Sabbath; in such cases, surely, the person who causes the profanation of the day is equally guilty with the laborer. I have known mistresses of families who would be shocked if you asked them to join a party of pleasure, or to direct their servants to do some unnecessary work on that day, without hesitation give their dress-maker such strict orders to complete some article of apparel by a particular time, as would compel them to work on the Lord's day.

"The Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath, and his people are freed from the slavish observance of the Sabbath according to the rites of the Jews in times of old, but still it is *his day;* it is the Lord's day, set apart peculiarly for opportunities of worshipping him and attending to the concerns of our souls; so that those who needlessly employ it otherwise themselves, or cause others to do so, assuredly break his holy word, and act contrary to his will: and let it ever be remembered, that Sabbath-breaking almost invariably stands the first in the dark catalogue of those crimes which lead men to punishment. This should particularly be inculcated on the minds of children. As for this poor watchmaker, your account makes me anxious to know more about him; I intend to call upon him this evening; suppose you go with me, and we will see if we can help the poor man."

SABBATH EVENING.

Blessed is the house where those who bear rule seek the Lord. There can be no real peace or comfort in a family unless the parents love the Saviour; then his peace will be with them and their household. "The curse of the Lord is

in the house of the wicked, but he blesseth the habitation of the just." Prov. 3 : 33.

This was instanced in our poor watchmaker. At eight o'clock we knocked at the door of his room; Jenny came and asked, "Who is there?"

"Friends of your father."

She called him: he came, and said, "Gentlemen, I do not recollect you, but if you please, walk in."

"I am a servant of Christ," said I, offering my hand, "and I trust it is upon his work we are come."

"If this is the case, perhaps you will join our little circle;" so saying, he led us into the inner room. We found his wife sitting up in bed, the youngest child lay in a cradle, and the other two children stood by the bedside; two or three friends sat at the other end of the room, where a Bible lay open upon the table.

"These are our friends, and also friends of our Saviour," said the watchmaker to us; "they call here sometimes on the Lord's day evening, to talk over those things which concern our souls. I was just now endeavoring to explain to the children the parable of the two friends." Luke 11 : 5.

"Do not let us interrupt you."

THE PARABLE.

The father then proceeded to explain the love of God to his children, and to show that they might be sure of being heard and answered when they prayed earnestly with sincerity and truth. "Observe," said he, "this friend came at midnight, an unseasonable hour, but he did not hesitate, for it was a friend to whom he applied. He was not discouraged at being refused, for he knew that his friend could

give him what he desired; he knew his kind disposition, his readiness to oblige, and he trusted in his friend's affection for him—he was not mistaken; he obtained all that he asked for. Now, my dear children, is not our God a better friend than any we can have in this world? is there any one of our friends, even the best we have, who would lay down his life for us? Would any one offer to bear the wrath of God for us? Yet our Saviour bore this when he was nailed to the cross. Again, can there be a friend richer or more powerful than he is? Think for a moment: what are the riches of this world when compared with the treasures of his love? And do not let us forget, that our Friend is not only thus able to give exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think, but he is also ready and willing so to do. He will withhold nothing that is for their good, from those who really seek him. He is always ready to hear, times and seasons are alike to him: I say this, my children, knowing that what I say is true; his ears are always open to our prayers, he is always ready to hearken unto us and to bless us. Remember what he has done for us in times past. My dear children, look to the Saviour, he has said that he will give his Holy Spirit to those who ask him; apply to your heavenly Father as you would to me—perhaps I do not attend to you directly, but you are not afraid to ask again, till your desires are attended to—plead thus with your heavenly Father, he will hear and answer you; earnestly do I entreat him that you may be led to seek him early." Prov. 8: 17.

A respectable female, one of the party, who was their aunt, added a few words of good advice; among other things, she told the children always to pray at night before they got into bed, for when they put it off till they laid down, they would be tired, and would only offer up a few vague and

sleepy words. "This, my dear children," said she, "is not praying." The two children thanked their aunt and father, and having kissed their mother, retired to their little beds.

"They are not aware of their privileges," said I; "one day they will know the advantage of having had parents who loved the Saviour: may he bless your endeavors to instruct them."

"Amen!" said the mother. "It is my earnest prayer that my dear Jenny may early know what it is to seek the Lord; then I can leave her without anxiety."

"The blessing of the Lord," said I, "is with you; he will make your strength equal to your day."

"Yes," said the watchmaker, "the Lord is our shepherd: he crowneth us with loving kindness and tender mercies."

"My good friend," said I, "have you long held these sentiments? What first led you to this way of thinking?"

"Sir, I will tell you as briefly as I can, since you wish to know the particulars."

HISTORY OF THE WATCHMAKER.

"I was brought up to the watch-making business—first errand-boy, then apprentice, afterwards a journeyman, in a considerable manufactory. But, alas, I was scarcely instructed in the first principles of religion: my parents were poor, and they were glad to find a place for me as soon as I could earn a trifle. My master taught me nothing except my business; and although my memory was good, and retained what little I had learned, it was very little indeed. I was like the generality of mechanics, disorderly and irreligious; I laughed at the Bible, though I had hardly ever

looked in it; while the blasphemies of Paine and Voltaire, and other works of a licentious and impure description, were my delight. I was a skilful workman, and earned a good deal of money, but I squandered all away as fast as I received it: the public-house was my daily resort; in a word, I was just that thoughtless, wicked being, which most of our artisans are, careless of the morrow, and indifferent as to the concerns of my soul.

"This was the wretched course in which I lived when I married my dear wife: she was then ignorant of the Saviour, but she had been regularly brought up and instructed by her parents; of course she was much grieved at my conduct, and often mildly and earnestly urged me to reform. I could not but acknowledge the truth of what she said, and a thousand times determined to lead a new life. But, sir, who can change his own heart or reform his conduct, when he sets about it in his own strength? My old habits and companions all conspired to retain me in their bands—I could not extricate myself, but plunged again and again into sin and folly.

"I was a husband and a father, but cared not for wife or child: I was always unhappy and discontented, and when I returned home it was only to wreak upon my patient companion those tempers which were the consequence of my own ill conduct. Oh, sir, are you at all acquainted with the families of our mechanics? If so, I need not attempt to describe the discord, the misery, and wretchedness which so often troubles them, or to paint the consequences which ensue.

"Thus passed ten miserable years. I was an unkind husband, an irreligious father. This brief description at once tells you our wretchedness. 'There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.' Isaiah 57: 21. Infidels may say

what they please, but I speak from bitter experience: where the love of the Saviour abideth not, there is wrath, envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness; in a word, it is hell upon earth. Oh, that my dear wife could forget those years of pain and suffering; the remembrance of them is a burden which would overwhelm me, did not I remember that the loving kindness and tender mercy of the Saviour is greater than our sins. Oh," said he, taking his wife by the hand, "have you, can you forget these things?"

"My dear," replied this excellent woman, "can your wife remember what our heavenly Father has declared that he has forgotten?"

"What do I not owe to you," said he. "Thus it is, sir, that she always supports me; her example, and above all, her prayers, have indeed been blessed to my soul.

"About three years ago, I observed that my wife had some new acquaintance; there was evidently a change in her; she appeared more anxious about religion, and I found that she attended public worship more frequently. I spoke to her about this: she answered by asking me to go with her some day. I strove to find fault with her, but her conduct, always kind, and affectionate, and obedient, was now more so than ever. About this time I was visited with a severe illness, the consequence of my excesses. Death stared me in the face; my sins crowded into my recollection; a horrible dread overwhelmed me. I entreated my wife and her friends to pray for my soul. Never shall I forget her joy when she heard this request. From that moment she seemed more at ease when talking with me. She read to me from the Bible, and often conversed about serious things. I was very desirous to recover, that I might have time and opportunity to do away my past sins by more correct conduct in future; and I thought that if I did do so, I

should be sure to go to heaven. Oh, how far was I from the knowledge of the Gospel; but my heart was yet too hard, and (vile as I was) too full of self-righteousness to submit to a Saviour, and desire pardon through him.

"As I grew stronger, the natural enmity of my heart against religion was again manifested. I endeavored to drive away these thoughts, and now became more averse to my wife's proceedings; and one day, when she asked me to accompany her to public worship, I broke out into a fit of passion, and declared that if she ever said another word on the subject I would throw her books into the fire. My poor wife, as you may suppose, was much grieved; her only comfort was, that her daughter began to seek the knowledge of the Saviour.

"Some months afterward, one of my companions in sin died. His end was dreadful, and I was struck with this, and often thought upon it. One day I was walking in the fields, when a person passed me, and put a little Tract into my hand, saying, 'My friend, this little book is worth your attention.' To my surprise I found it contained a short and earnest address upon death and judgment: it showed me the danger of my state, and pointed out the only remedy whereby I could escape, and earnestly called upon the reader to seek this remedy, and fly to Christ for the pardon of his sins. I still endeavored to drive away these thoughts, but could not.

"One evening, as I wandered abroad, I heard a person who was walking before me call to another, and pointing to some people who were entering a place of worship, he exclaimed, 'There, Tom, are the godly ones! Have you a mind to go and be made a saint?' These words (I knew not why) excited my curiosity: I entered the place, and sat down; the service had already begun, and the minister was

in his prayer before sermon. Never shall I forget the impression his words made upon me—they pierced my heart and soul; I could think of nothing but my wretched state, and the wrath of God which I so justly deserved.

"I did not tell my wife what was passing in my mind, but waited with impatience for the Wednesday following, when there would be service again. As I entered I saw my wife and daughter; their countenances declared their joy at seeing me there. The minister who preached had chosen for his text, 'Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.' John 1 : 29. The picture which he drew of the state of man, lost and ruined by sin, and filled with enmity against God, seemed as if intended for me. I could not but see my own likeness, and from that moment I felt that I could not obtain salvation unless it were given me from above. I now was filled with anxiety respecting my soul.

"My wife and daughter followed me in silence when the service was over. I saw they were afraid to speak to me, and I said to them, 'I see you are afraid of me, and I do not wonder, for I now see what a monster of iniquity I am.' At these words they endeavored to console me: my wife said, 'O, do not despair; seek the Lord, and he will be found; cast your burthen upon him, and he will sustain you. He can heal your soul. Yes, Jesus himself now invites you: Oh, do not hesitate, but cast yourself upon him; with him is mercy and forgiveness.'

"Need I add any further particulars? The Holy Spirit has been pleased to lead me to the knowledge of Christ, and to show me what the Saviour has done and suffered to bring us near to God. This now appears clear to me; but the Holy Spirit alone could teach me that Christ has suffered for me, the just for the unjust. 1 Peter, 3 : 18. That he

has borne our sins in his own body on the tree; and that the chastisement of my iniquity is upon him. When I was thus led to feel that he gave himself for our sins, Gal. 1: 4, then my sins became hateful to me; I felt that they had nailed him to the cross, and I earnestly desired to dedicate myself to his service, and to live to him who died for me.

"I may truly say that my experience since that time has been one of peace and joy; thanks be to the Lord who gave me, in my dear wife, a faithful guide and counsellor, to whom I could always resort. We have not been without our trials; you know, sir, that those who seek to walk in the paths of the Lord must expect to meet with opposition from the world. My former connections have endeavored to trouble me as much as they could; they accuse me of hypocrisy, and utter many falsities about me. Often have I been tempted to say, wherewithal shall we be clothed and fed? But I have always had reason to take shame to myself for my unbelief; and the many mercies I have experienced prove to me that the Lord will not forsake those whom he calls his own."

"No," said I, "he will not leave you; he cannot forget his people; he is faithful, and his word of promise standeth sure. Christ has given himself for you, and possessing him you have received all things; being heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ." Rom. 8: 17.

REFLECTIONS.

"Well," said my friend, when we were in the street, "this passes all that I could have supposed. This, then, is one of those men who are called enthusiasts, knaves, hypocrites, and are even accused of licentious conduct. Would to God that we were all like this man!"

"You now see," said I, "the mistaken notion the world entertains of these people, and you now are aware how falsely they are accused: this is because the carnal mind is enmity against God. The world hates them as it hates their Lord and Master."

"I am most surprised," said my friend, "to observe the remarkable fruits of these doctrines. I have seen this man's conduct without disguise, and I cannot but judge of the excellency of what he professes by what I have seen him practise: I have been mistaken indeed in my ideas about these people."

"I trust God has caused you to see your error; inquire for yourself, seek direction from the Holy Spirit, and remember that it is not a mere matter of curiosity, but one of infinite importance; your everlasting happiness or misery depends thereon. May he direct you, and lead you to that knowledge which alone can make wise to salvation. I once was as you have been till now—an enemy to the people of God. But he is rich in mercy; he sought me while afar off: he showed me the exceeding riches of his love, and enabled me to draw near to him with joy and peace in believing. Oh, may this be your case! Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; lay hold upon the hope set before you. Forget not what you have seen and heard to-day. Adieu! To-morrow morning we will call again upon our poor watchmaker."

BETTER DAYS.

"See how they love one another." This was said of the first Christians. That divine love which cometh from above will ever shine with brightness in the children of God. It is the sure mark and seal whereby they are known among

men; the Spirit of God has impressed this upon them. Blessed is the man who has tasted of the Saviour's love; happy is the family where it is the bond of union.

It was exemplified in the poor watchmaker and his family; there all was love, peace, and union, regulating all their proceedings and influencing each individual. I never saw in any family such patience and kind attention from parents to children, nor did I ever see equal respect, submission, ready obedience, and docility, from children to parents. The love of God enlivened their hearts, and the influence of his Holy Spirit produced these effects.

When we entered his room, we found the watchmaker engaged in instructing a young man in one of the more difficult operations of his business; on inquiry we found he was a poor orphan, the son of a pious friend lately deceased, who had literally left his child to the care of Providence; and He who careth for the fatherless had inclined the heart of this poor man to take the lad, and to share his scanty pittance with him, feeding his soul at the same time with the bread of life; for those whose situation would seem to render them unable to assist others, often engage in acts of charity which should put many a more wealthy professor to the blush.

After a short conversation, "My friend," said I, "how are you off for work? could you finish some watches for me?"

My inquiry struck him with surprise; tears stood in his eyes: he clasped his hands and exclaimed, "Sir, God has sent you to us; I am quite out of work."

"So I understood; I was told your employer had dismissed you because you would not work on the Sabbath."

"'Tis too true: alas! sir, he knows no better—I myself once did the same to a polisher. God would have us all

kindly compassionate one to another. He alone can incline our hearts to keep his law."

"Worthy man," said my companion, seizing his hand, "I trust I have received good to my soul from what I have heard and seen of you."

"How can this be?"

"He was," said I, "wise and righteous in his own eyes; now he begins to see his own state, and his need of a Saviour, and perceives the false notions he entertained of the people of God."

"May God, of his infinite mercy, bless you," said the poor watchmaker; "may the seed take deep root downward, and bring forth much fruit upward; his ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace."

It is now time to finish my narrative, and may the truths set forth in this Tract be impressed upon your heart and mine, my dear reader. Remember that "the Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them."

AM I SELF-DECEIVED?

Could a more startling question be asked? I must soon appear at the judgment-bar. Omniscient purity will speedily search me through. Every disguise will then be torn off. The truth will come out. Eternity will be to me full of bliss or woe, according to the character I shall then have. I am a professor of religion. Perhaps, in the judgment of my charitable friends, I am pious. But is their judgment correct? Am I a hypocrite? O, that I knew! My heart does not accuse me of that gross kind of hypocrisy which, "for a pretence, makes long prayers," at the very time I am thinking how I may rob widows and orphans. Yet my "heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." I know that much of the hypocrisy in the world is of a very subtle and insidious nature. It may be so with me. Am I a hypocrite? I will honestly inquire.

It is no proof that I am not one, that my *neighbors do not say that I am.* There never were greater hypocrites on earth than the Pharisees. Yet the people commonly thought them very pious, and said, "If but two men are saved, one of them will be a Pharisee." Nor does the good opinion of *pious* and *eminent* men prove me to be a genuine Christian. The apostles all seem to have had a high opinion of Judas. Simon Magus won Peter's confidence. Paul at one time thought well of Demas. I may be a hypocrite while others think me a saint.

It is not certain that I am not a hypocrite, because I have not been in the habit of *regarding myself as one.* I am much inclined to think well of myself. It would require

more than common candor to indict one's self for so high a crime. Many of the vilest hypocrites have abounded in self-confidence and self-esteem. Job was *grieved* at the charge of hypocrisy; but he did not show half the temper that the Pharisees did when the same charge was brought against them. Perhaps no persons have a better opinion of themselves than the grossest hypocrites.

Nor is it certain that I am not a hypocrite, because my history *corresponds in some things with the experience of some eminent professors.* First of all, some eminent professors are hypocrites, and it requires no grace for me to attain to the same experience with them. Again, it may be that it is merely in unessential incidents and circumstances, and not in the very essence of piety, that my experience agrees with that of others.

One MARK OF A HYPOCRITE is, that while he may be wise, and prudent, and knowing in worldly matters, he is *not so in the things of religion.* The Spirit of Christ does not rest upon him. He has not the anointing which teacheth him "all things." He is not "of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord." The hypocrite may be of high intellectual attainments—may discourse fluently, and even eloquently, on religious truths; yet he has no spiritual discernment. He is blind, and cannot see afar off. Jesus Christ says that this spiritual blindness and ignorance rested on the hypocrites of his day. Matt. 16: 2, 3. No hypocrite has "evidence of things not seen" by the senses, or by carnal reason. O, that I may not fail of heaven at last!

If I do not love *secret prayer*, I must be a hypocrite. An unregenerate man may pray, when terrified, or sick, or afflicted, or when his conscience is somewhat quickened, but he has no love for prayer even then. Returning prosperity drives him from his closet. Will God hear the hypocrite's "cry, when trouble cometh upon him? Will he

delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?" Job 27: 9, 10. This is an awful subject. Seek to understand it well. Be honest. O, my soul, dost thou delight in God? Hast thou pleasure in the Almighty? Dost thou love to commune with him? Dost thou love prayer?

Hypocrites are subject to strong fears and *terrors in times of Divine judgments.* When war, famine, or pestilence threatens a land, or when personal calamities gather thickly around the spurious professor, he is often filled with dismay. Seriously threaten to take from him property, liberty, character, or life, and he knows not what to do. The prospect of speedy death is dismal to him. Isaiah, having described some terrible judgments, says, "The sinners in Zion are afraid: fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites." Chap. 33: 14. The termination of their lives is sometimes heart-rending. The rain descends, the floods come, and the winds blow, and beat upon the ill-founded house, and it falls, and great is the fall of it. O, my soul, shall thy hopes be all blasted at last?

He that indulges in severe and harsh *censure of others* for minor faults, and condemns not himself for greater faults, is a hypocrite. Matt. 7: 1, 5. How is my practice in this respect? With what judgment I judge, I shall be judged. Then, what will be my eternal destiny? O, my soul, practise no deceit on thyself here. Am I a hypocrite?

To be prompt in promising, and *tardy in performing*, is a part of a hypocritical character. A good man, intending to do all he engages to do, is slow in passing his word. But hypocrites "say, and do not." Matt. 23: 3. They say, We go, Lord; but they go not. They abound in promises and professions of obedience and love; but they stop at that. Is this my character? How am I keeping my solemn vows, made at the table of the Lord?

Ostentation is another feature of a hypocritical character. Matt. 23 : 5. So is a hiding of sin under specious pretences. Matt. 23 : 14. Punctilious scrupulosity about little matters, and neglect of the substantial duties of life, is another mark of a hypocrite. Those who lived in Christ's day, strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel. They gave a tenth of all their garden herbs, and yet they were cruel, unjust, and faithless. How stands my character in these respects?

Hypocrites, too, in every age, praise the pious dead, and *hate the living* who act just as the pious dead acted. Matt. 23 : 29, 30. They commend good men, whose example and reproofs reach them not, and rail at those whose holy example before their eyes warns them of their guilt and danger. Is this my character? I admire the intrepidity of Nathan in calling his backslidden monarch to repentance. Do I admire the man that cries in my ears, Return, O thou backslider, unto the Lord!

Excess and overacting attach to all hypocritical characters. Their prayers are too long—their zeal rises to fury—their moderation is indifference. When they would be wise, they are cunning. So in every thing. All is overacted.

Am I a hypocrite? How momentous the question! How immense the interest at stake! Lord, "search me and know me, try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting;" leave me not to the surprise of coming wrath. "For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?" Hypocrites shall "receive the greater damnation." Matt. 23 : 14. I cannot, I will not rest until I have good reason for saying, "Lord, thou knowest all things—thou knowest that I love thee."

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CONVERSATION IN A BOAT,

BETWEEN TWO SEAMEN.

BY A CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND,

FORMERLY A LIEUTENANT IN THE ROYAL NAVY.

The Repulse was as noble a seventy-four, and the crew were as fine fellows, as ever swam salt water, or went into action. No ship could beat her, either at harbor or sea duty; no men were better dressed, or better behaved; and I think I may say, no men were better treated by their officers. While the forecastle could show an unusual number of brave and able seamen, the quarter-deck furnished its full quota of brave and gentlemanly officers, who knew and did their own duty, and were always ready to notice and encourage those of the crew who did theirs, and to grant them every indulgence and comfort which the service admitted of. Thus the old saying was proved true on board the Repulse, *Good officers make good men.*

Every body knew the Repulse's boats, and boats' crews, long before they reached the beach; for they were the smartest on the station. When they were away from the ship on duty, no person ever saw them go off with a drunken, noisy, dirty crew; and whenever the captain or ward-room officers went on shore for a walk, the boats' crews were almost always at liberty to take a ramble by themselves, for they were sure to be back, and ready to return on board with their officers at the appointed time. There was no running away on the part of the men, nor any swearing, abusive, or threatening language on that of the officers; no wonder, then, that others should call her "The Happy Repulse." Many a man has *wished* he belonged to her; and I have often wished that every vessel in the navy was like her, both as to officers and crew in general.

There was, however, one thing on board the Repulse, which, above all others, helped to set every thing else to rights; and that one grand thing—however strange it may sound to some ears—was *Religion*. I don't mean that *all* the officers and ship's company were religious: no; many, of both classes, neglected the care of their souls, although this is the one thing needful, even before and above all others. But while many lived as though there were no God, there were others, and that a good number, who read their Bible, and who not only took delight in seeing the church rigged out on Sundays, but were much taken with the kind and affectionate manner in which the chaplain endeavored to instruct them in the evenings between decks, and in his own cabin. He was, indeed, as kind to them as though he had been their brother; and as he let no circumstance or opportunity pass, without endeavoring to point out their duty to God and their country, and to show them the way to be happy in this world and in that to come, the reader will not be surprised to hear, that many of the Repulse's crew knew more about these things, and acted more

like wise and good men, than most in the British Navy. But perhaps this will more fully appear, if I lay before him the substance of a conversation which took place between *Harry Williams*, cockswain of the Green Cutter, and *Tom Brown*, who pulled the stroke oar.

This ship was lying in the river Tagus, about a mile above Belem Castle. The day being very fine, the top-gallant and royal yards across, the decks all to rights, and the sails loosed to dry, a party of officers determined to take the advantage of a flood tide and leading breeze, to go up to Lisbon for a forenoon's amusement. The Green Cutter was therefore manned, which, dashing through every thing in high style, in a short time landed them at the new town. The crew, as usual, had permission to go into the city, and buy whatever trifles they or their messmates wanted, but were to be again in the boat, and ready to go off at two o'clock, to dinner. This they promised to do, and on shore jumped all hands except Tom Brown, who that day was boat-keeper.

Harry, who did not immediately quit the place, thought he saw a little dissatisfaction in Tom's countenance; and, guessing that he wished to go into the town, said, "Tom, if you are particularly desirous to take a run with the rest of the crew, I will stay and keep the boat myself; but you must not be gone above an hour."

"Thank you, Harry," replied Tom, "that is just the thing I wanted this morning; you shall find me true to the time." Thus saying, with one spring he was on shore, and made all sail to join his shipmates.

Harry, meanwhile, having struck the masts and spread the awning, proceeded to push out the boat from the noise and bustle at the landing-place, and then he sat down in the sternsheets; and while some of the crowd on shore were buying, and some selling; while fishwives were scolding, and lazy friars were begging; while many a seaman from

the fleet was indulging in oaths and drunkenness in the wine-shops, and many were full of murmuring and discontent on board their respective ships; Harry Williams, I say, while all this was going on, sat down in the sternsheets of the Green Cutter, and taking his little Bible from the locker, with good-humor in his countenance, and peace and content in his heart, read with much delight of Him whom storms and winds obey, even of that Saviour who came into the world to save sinners; of Him who had often covered his head in the day of battle. Thus occupied, he scarcely perceived how the time passed away, and was not a little surprised to hear Tom hail the boat so soon.

Tom, indeed, could have found employment and diversion for half a dozen hours; but, thoughtless as he was, he was yet too honest a fellow to break his word, or impose on the kindness of a friend. He had been absent his hour, although Harry thought it not more than half that time, and, therefore, he jumped into the foresheets, thanked the cockswain for keeping her for him, and asked, whether he did not intend to go into the city.

"No, Tom," replied the other, "I have nothing to do there to-day, and I think it's far more pleasant sitting here under the shade of this awning quietly reading, than to be strolling about yonder filthy streets in the midst of noise, and nonsense, and wickedness."

Tom. Well, now, I don't think so. To be sure, Harry, you are a better scholar than I; and what with your always reading when you have a little spare time, and what with your so often talking to the chaplain about the Bible, and I don't know what, why, you must needs know more about these things than myself; but still, Harry, I don't understand these religious ways. I think there are many things to be seen in the town, which please me better than keeping the boat; and at any rate, I would sooner be moving about anywhere than sitting quietly here reading the Bible.

HARRY. That I don't doubt, Tom, because it is as you say, you don't understand these things: you don't know what religion is, or how it can make a man happier than fiddles and dancing, and noise and racket; but the thing is true, although you do not understand it. You know, Tom, that I was once as madbrained and thoughtless a fellow as ever sailed out of Shields harbor. I have tried what grog and noise and songs and fiddles can do; and now, Tom, whether you will believe me or not, I can say from experience, that these things do not go half so far towards making a man happy, as religion does. This book tells me, and I find it to be true, that "the ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

TOM. As to believing what you say, Harry, I would take your word before any man's in the ship, except the chaplain's; but after all, I don't understand, no, nor much like these ways.

HARRY. I am glad, Tom, to find you think so well of the chaplain, and I only wish you would attend more to his advice and instructions; for I am sure he would be as ready to talk with you as with myself; and, as you can read a little, you might soon understand as much about these matters as I can tell you.

TOM. As to that, I don't know; but about the chaplain, why every body must think well of such a man as he is; for certain, he is going right before the wind to heaven: but still, Harry, I think he is too strict; yet, I suppose, by and by, we should all like to be moored in the same harbor with him in kingdom-come.

HARRY. Yes, Tom, however men may now slight, and turn their backs upon heaven, the day is coming, when they will think very differently of it. Oh, what a sad hour will that be to many of our shipmates, when they come to die! For I fear many will die as they are now living, quite unconcerned about their souls, and those things which God has

prepared for them that love him. Such men, Tom, will see that heaven, and have a view of the glory and blessedness which they slighted; but they will not be able to enter into it. You, Tom, would, by your own confession, like to go with your chaplain by and by; this, however, will not be allowed you, unless you endeavor now to live and act as he does.

Tom. Why now, Harry, you don't want me to preach sermons, and to be always saying my prayers, do you?

Harry. No, Tom; for though you are a good forecastleman, yet I think you would do very badly at preaching sermons. Nor do I want you to be always saying your prayers, as you call it; for there are times and seasons for all things. If a squall were this night to part our cables; or if, on going out to sea, an enemy was to heave in sight, I should be very sorry to find you stowed away, saying your prayers, when your duty would call you to cut away the sheet anchor, or to clear for action?

Tom. Well, then, what is it you mean?

Harry. I mean that you should fear God, as well as honor and serve the king; that you should set your heart most on those things which are of the greatest value and consequence. I wish you to strive most after that which will make you most happy.

Tom. All this seems reasonable and right enough. Now then, Harry, tell me plainly what is of the greatest consequence and value, and what will make me most happy; and you shall see I'll set about the work directly.

Harry. Well said. Now, then, mark my word: *Eternity*, and a future state of happiness in heaven, are things of the greatest consequence and value; and the blessing of God to watch over us, and to keep and preserve us in all our ways, is such a happiness, amidst all the ups and downs of life, as the world can neither give nor take away. Now, Tom, you are a man of your word; I hope you will keep

your promise, and set about the work directly; that is, I hope you will really consider and learn more about these matters from this day.

Tom. Harry, you have got to windward of me here. No man can say I ever deceived him with false or empty promises. No; Tom Brown's not the man to fly from his word; but I didn't see where you were likely to reach on that tack, or I should have been more sparing with my promises. To be sure, the things seem right enough, as you say; but when I begin to think of so considering the matter as to have my heart more set upon them than upon any thing else, I think I have promised more than I can perform.

Harry. I know you have, Tom. You have indeed made a promise which no man in the ship can of himself keep and perform; but you may get such assistance as will enable you to keep your word; yes, and to obtain the blessing too.

Tom. Are you sure of that, Harry?

Harry. Yes; and if I were as sure of your having a desire for these blessings, as I am of your getting all needful assistance, I should think the business in a fair way of soon being brought about.

Tom. Well, Harry, I can't say much about having a desire for these things; yet when one sits down to think a little about the matter, why one can't help wishing that all may go well at last. I always thought that was a good song which says, "There's a sweet little cherub that sits up *aloft*, to keep watch o'er the life of poor Jack." I suppose that is what you mean; but, Harry, who is that sweet little cherub that sits up aloft?

Harry. The child of a poet's fancy; or, in plain words, just such a person as the man who made the song was pleased to invent; but after all, the drift of that song is tolerably good; for it means to say, there is a power above,

which looks down and watches over those who dwell on land and sea; but if a man would understand these things aright, he must go to the Bible, where every thing concerning a future state, and also concerning how God's providence watches over us in this life, is plainly told us by God himself, in the Bible, and in no other book like that.

Tom. Avast, Harry; you say, God himself tells us these things in the Bible. Why, it seems to me that the Bible itself tells us, and yet the chaplain often talks about the Lord's telling us these things in the Bible, and he calls the Bible "the word of God:" all this is like traverse sailing to me; how do you make out these things?

Harry. I will try to clear up this point before we go any further. Here is my Bible: now all that you find here, from the first chapter of Genesis to the end of Revelation, was written down by Moses, David, Solomon, the prophets, the apostles, and other good men; and all these writers put down just such things as God directed them, and no other; and therefore, when what they had thus written down was collected into one book, the book was called "the Bible," or, "the word of God," because it contained such things as God himself had directed to be written down: do you understand me, Tom?

Tom. Yes, I quite understand this; but when and how did God tell these men to put down what we find in the Bible?

Harry. At different times and in different ways. Sometimes he spake as it were in a voice from heaven; sometimes he sent his angels to tell them; sometimes he made these things known to them in the visions of the night; at other times he put into their minds, without either visions or angels, what he would have them tell us. This last way, our chaplain says, is what is called "inspiration." And here, in 2 Tim. 3:16, it is said that "*all* Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for

doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

TOM. Well then, Harry, if this be the case, it must be a very foolish and a very bad thing to abuse the Bible; and I am sorry I ever made sport of it. But are you sure, Harry, that the Bible is indeed all true; and that the men you named did write what God told them? I don't know whether you ever heard of it or not; but I can tell you some of the knowing ones on board do at times say, the Bible is a false and foolish book. Now, Harry, I should like to be told how I am to know which side to believe: how I am to know that the Bible is TRUE.

HARRY. That's just the thing I sometime ago went to the chaplain about, and he told me, and moreover he wrote down in my book what he said would do to look at afterwards; and it comes in nicely at this time. Here it is, I will read it. "Some perhaps may say, How am I to know that the Bible is *true?* I will tell you how. Bad men could not write a book so plainly condemning all sin. Good men would not have deceived mankind by pretending that an invention of their own was a divine revelation; especially when they were likely to get nothing by this deception but reproach, imprisonment, torture, and death. Its doctrines and precepts are evidently superior to all human wisdom, and they are directly contrary to that corruption of our nature, which impostors would indulge as means of gaining their ends. It gives you an account of various *miracles* which were wrought in the midst of vast multitudes. The religion of the Bible was, at the time of its being first published abroad, supported by these miracles; and this religion has ever since continued in the world.

"There are also various *prophecies* in the Bible, which told of things which were to happen: such as, that the Jews should be scattered all over the world; that Babylon should be destroyed, and that many other things should come to

pass, which have already happened: and as these accounts were written long before the events to which they related could take place, their fulfilment afterwards is abundantly sufficient to satisfy every upright man respecting the truth of the Bible. These evidences have convinced the wise and good, in all ages, that it is true. And when once a man has experienced the power of the grace of God, in changing his heart by means of the Bible, he will then have the strongest evidence of all. 'He that believeth hath the witness in himself.'" Now, Tom, I will defy all the knowing ones in the ship, ay, and in the fleet too, to answer these observations. But who are they that want to persuade you the Bible is a false and foolish book?

Tom. Why there's that drunken swab, the captain of the mast, and Joe Long, of the gunner's crew, and some others.

Harry. A fine set, indeed! But, Tom, it is as the chaplain said, "Men are against the Bible, because the Bible is against their vile, ungodly conduct." As to the captain of the mast, and Joe Long, they well know that if the Bible stands, they must fall if they continue to live at their present rate; and seeing, Tom, they have no mind to alter, they wish to persuade themselves and others that the Bible is not true; but they will one day find it is true, to their sorrow. I again say, let them answer what I read to you if they can. The Bible is the word of God. It is the only Compass and Chart by which we can safely steer across the ocean of life. You may believe what Joe Long says, if you please; but, as for me, with the help of God, I will never direct my course by any other Chart, or steer by any other Compass.

Tom. Nay, Harry, I'm not inclined to believe what they say, or do as they do. You certainly know much better, and act much better, than they. You have told me much, that I did not understand before; and I think if some

of our lads understood more about these things, they would leave off talking against the Bible.

HARRY. I am not quite sure of that; but whether they would leave off or not, I am sure it is, as you before said, both very foolish and very wicked to slight or neglect, much more scoff at, the word of God. If the admiral were to write several kind letters of instruction to you and me, and in these letters were to promise to give us, by and by, a snug house and home close to his own dwelling, and there to provide for us through our old age, I dare say we should think it a great favor. Do you suppose if a few idle, drunken, reprobate fellows laughed at our letters, or scoffed at us for reading them, that we should tear them up, or throw them overboard?

TOM. No, Harry, they might laugh and scoff as long as they pleased; but I think they would not make me tear up my letters, nor forget what was said and promised in them; and I am sure I should be a great fool indeed, if, through their persuasion, I offended the admiral, and turned my back on his offered goodness.

HARRY. Well then, Tom, as in this case you see the thing in its true colors, and would act as a wise man, let me persuade you to act in the same way with respect to the Bible, and towards Him who is higher than all the admirals and kings of the earth. He, Tom, who inspired the prophets and apostles to write what you find in the Bible, is the same great and glorious Being who, as we say at church, "alone spreads out the heavens, and rules the raging of the sea, and hath encompassed the waters with bounds until day and night come to an end." O, Tom, how wonderful it is that he should stoop so low as to take notice of such creatures as you and me; to order such blessed letters of instruction and promises to be written for our learning and encouragement, in health, in sickness, and at death itself! We, Tom, and all the ship's company, are making the voy-

age of life, and from the hour in which we were launched on this troubled ocean, we have, day after day, run out more and more of our distance, and are nearer every day to the end of our voyage; but the great question is, Have we shaped our course by the Bible as our chart? Have we steered our way by the word of God as our compass? And have we good reason to believe that we shall, through God's help, hold on and make a good landfall at last, and so fetch into the haven of eternal rest? This, Tom, is no trifling matter. When the voyage is done it cannot be run over again; whether it be well ended or not, it must remain for ever in the same state in which it was finished; as the tree falls, so it lies; as death leaves us, so judgment finds us; and our doom is fixed; nor can the price of a thousand worlds alter it.

Tom. Ah, Harry, you was always a good-hearted fellow, even before you turned to these religious ways. If I were as safe as you are, I should be well off; you are always doing somebody or other a good turn; no doubt but *you* will make a good landfall; but I fear the port of heaven lies too far to windward for poor Tom Brown ever to fetch it.

Harry. Tom, I am glad to find you are likely to weather one danger, however, and it is no small one; vast numbers have struck on it, and been lost.

Tom. What is that, Harry? I'm sure I don't know much about these dangers, or the way to escape them.

Harry. It is the rock of vain confidence, or the thinking ourselves in the fair way for heaven, and sure of making the port, when we are steering eight or ten points broad of the course. If you were this night to go and ask twenty of the greatest sinners in the ship where they expect to go when they die, I make no doubt but nineteen of them would say, "they hoped to be saved and go to heaven, as well as their neighbors." Thus, Tom, they rest in a false peace,

and encourage themselves in a vain confidence of doing well at last, although the word of God says, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Psalm 9: 17. Now, Tom, you seem to think that you have lived very forgetful of God; you know that you have not steered by the compass of his word, nor shaped your course by the Bible as your chart: and I think you have good sense enough to know that going on at this rate is not likely to take you to heaven.

Tom. You say very true, Harry. For though my heart is good at the bottom, yet I have sadly neglected and often scoffed at the Bible; and, indeed, if all the nations that forget God are to be turned into hell, I am afraid things would go badly with me, if I were to take my departure to-night.

Harry. Indeed, Tom, I am afraid so: for here it is said by Christ himself, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3: 3, 5. Now, Tom, I think you are not born again of the Spirit; nay, I don't think you see any necessity for this second birth, or even know any thing about the matter.

Tom. Why, Harry, you are getting quite out of my depth. I don't understand this; for I have often wondered what was meant by being *born again;* can you tell me, Harry? For it seems necessary that a man should know something about it, seeing it is declared that unless he is born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven.

Harry. This point much puzzled me for some time, till our good chaplain explained it, and made it very clear to my mind; but I don't know whether I shall be able to explain it so clearly to you. First of all, however, let me set you right in another mistake. You talk about your heart being good at the bottom, and about my always having

had a good heart. This, Tom, is the doctrine of the world, and (too much) of our ship; but it is not the doctrine of the Bible. You and I did not bring good hearts into the world with us, at least not better than David's was; and here in the fifty-first Psalm, after having prayed the Lord to pardon his sins, he says in the fifth verse, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Do you think, when we were born, that we brought more holy dispositions, and more heavenly thoughts and tempers into the world with us, than David did?

Tom. No, to be sure not.

Harry. Well, then, instead of trying to make excuses for our bad conduct by saying, "Our hearts are good at the bottom," we should do like David; that is, go and confess the worst of our case, and dive down to the bottom of the mischief, and say, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Tom, all the sin and evil which have filled, and which do now fill the world, all spring out of the evil of men's hearts. From the hour of our birth down to the threescore years and ten, we find our thoughts and desires cleave to and love the things of the world, and the ways which God has forbidden us. We every day offend against God's holy law, by leaving undone those things which we ought to have done; and by doing those things which we ought not to have done. Nay, such is the state of man's heart by nature, that when left to itself it goes astray continually from God, like a lost sheep. Before the old world was drowned, we find, in Genesis 6 : 5, that "God saw the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil, and that continually." Nor is the account of the present world of people any better; for here in the fifty-third Psalm, second and third verses, David tells us, that God "looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that

did seek God." But, Tom, see here, what was the case: "Every one of them," says this word of God, "every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." And to conclude this matter, St. Paul, a thousand years after David's time, when writing to some who had changed their way, and were living a new sort of life, says, "You were dead in trespasses and sins; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Eph. 2: 1, 3. Now, Tom, without turning to many other places, which I could easily do, these which I have shown you are sufficient to prove how mistaken you are, when you think your heart and mine are good by nature.

Tom. Never in all my life did I think such things as these were in the Bible. Why, this is making me, and all the officers and men on board, almost as black-hearted as the devil himself. To tell you the truth, I don't like it; and yet it certainly is in the Bible, and I am afraid too much of it is true. Well, this is being in a sad plight indeed; but come, it never shall be said that Tom Brown strikes while his head is above water. I'll set to and make myself better, and be more like you for the time to come.

Harry. Did you make yourself at first, Tom? Did you come into the world just when and how you pleased?

Tom. No, how could that be, man?

Harry. Nor can you, without God's help, make yourself over again a second time, any more than you could do it at first. Tom, the leopard cannot change its own spots, nor the black Ethiopian his skin. Nor will poor Tom Brown, without divine grace, change his heart, which by nature "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

Tom. You are the first man that ever charged me with having a deceitful heart. Harry, bad as I am, no person

in the ship can say that Tom Brown ever deceived him. No, I hate deceit from my very soul.

HARRY. I don't mean to charge you with ever deceiving any of your shipmates: I know you would sooner take a flogging than tell a lie, or deceive any man. But, Tom, while your heart scorns to deceive another, has it not long and often deceived yourself, in every thing concerning the nature of religion, the nature of the heart, the nature of heaven and of happiness; concerning the way to procure them, and the time of setting about this important business? Here is the place, Jeremiah 17: 9, where it says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" God tells us the account, and then puts the question, "Who can know it?" I remember my conscience often smote me, and made me say, "Well, I am determined to leave off these ways; by and by I will set about and think, and act like some of our ship's company." But, alas! my heart only deceived me, when it quieted my conscience with these empty promises; for, from time to time, I acted my old sins over again; and again and again I said to myself, I will do so no more. My heart trusted in its own strength, loved its own ways, and always was saying, "Things are good at the bottom." Now, Tom, can you pretend to say your heart has never deceived you in these things? Can you tell how often and to what length it has done so? If you can, then answer the question which says, "Who can know it?"

TOM. If this be what you mean, or rather what the Bible means, by the heart being deceitful, why, Harry, I feel it is true, and the matter is only becoming worse and worse.

HARRY. Now then, Tom, let us go back to the point we left, about being *born again*. This expression means that a great change must pass upon a man, upon every man, before he can enter into the kingdom of heaven: it is such

a change as none but God can bring about, for it brings a man from desiring and seeking after earthly things as the greatest and most desirable objects, to desire and seek after heaven and the salvation of his soul as the one thing most needful; so that it is in fact as if a man's old heart had been taken out, and a new one put in its place; and therefore this change is sometimes called being born again, or being born of the Spirit, because the Spirit of God brings the thing to pass. And the reason is very clear why we must undergo this change: God is a Holy God, Christ is a Holy Saviour, Heaven is a holy place, the Angels are holy, and all those happy souls who have died in the faith and love of the Son of God are there holy also. There, Tom, in heaven, it is the eternal delight of all to adore and praise him who sits upon the throne, and it is the delight of God himself to dwell in the midst of that holy, happy company. Now, Tom, none of our jovial fellows, as they are called, would love such company, or such employment as this. Do you think that the man who takes delight in drinking, swearing, or any sinful pleasure and practice, would be comfortable in heaven? No, for he would not be able to find one angel or one soul who would keep him company. He would be like a fish out of water; and could he do it, he would fly back to his old companions, and leave heaven to those who loved such like doings as praising and adoring God: for you know these things do not delight the soul of an unconverted man, that is, of a man who has not experienced that change which is called being born again. And therefore we are again brought back to the words of our Saviour, "Except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." He is not a fit companion for those that are there, neither are they such as would please and delight him.

Tom. Well, I understand more about this than I ever did before, and I think it must be as you say. Such like

fellows as myself and many of the crew, would make but poor company for angels in heaven. But, Harry, if I set about and pray to God, and get my heart made better, then you know I shall live a better life, and I hope I shall at last deserve to go to heaven, although I never expect to do so well as David, or St. Paul, or our chaplain.

HARRY. If you do pray sincerely, and in earnest, for the Spirit of God to sanctify your heart, you will certainly have your request granted, and then no doubt but your thoughts, your words and actions, will be better than they were before; but still you cannot deserve heaven, nor ever get there on account of your own deeds and doings.

TOM. Why, now you are getting me hard and fast aground again; almost before I was afloat, and clear of the last knotty point. At this rate you will shut the port of heaven against all the men in the fleet. Why! don't you, Harry, expect that your deeds and doings will get you to heaven? Don't you think our chaplain *deserves* to go to heaven for all the good and kind things he says and does every day? I think you are ahead of your reckoning now. There's your Bible; now tell me, either with or without its assistance, why a man's good deeds and doings cannot deserve heaven, after God has changed his heart.

HARRY. Because these deeds are so imperfect, so mixed with sin, that even David and St. Paul, and all the good men we read of in the Bible, never thought of getting to heaven on account of their deservings.

TOM. This is very strange. Come, show me this from the Bible, and then tell me why it is, that the actions of such men cannot get them to heaven.

HARRY. Well then, here, in Psalm 143: 2, David, sensible of the imperfection of his best services, prays to the Lord, and says, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified:" that is, as the chaplain explained it, "Do not, O Lord, judge

or try me according to my deserts, for then neither myself nor any man can be cleared or pardoned." And again, in Psalm 130: 3, he said, "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord, who shall stand?" And as to the Prophet Isaiah, when speaking of himself and the very best people of his nation, he says, Isaiah 64: 6, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." St. Paul was once very conceited, and thought he had been so strict, and had got so many good actions to take him to heaven, that he should be sure of getting a good berth there. But, Tom, when he saw the real value of all his own actions, then he both thought and spake differently of them; he no longer boasted of, or trusted in any thing that he had done, but he gave up all, and gladly cast his soul on the Lord Jesus Christ, to be saved by him, and through what this Saviour had done for sinners. Here, in Philippians 3: 7, he says, "What things were gain to me," that is, Tom, what things he (St. Paul) thought so good, and trusted so much to, once, "those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Thus, Tom, you see that those good men, who certainly were better livers than any among us, did not expect to get to heaven because they deserved it. No, they knew that they had done many things which they ought not to have done, and had left undone much that they ought to have performed. And, moreover, they knew that if they had done all which has been commanded, yet they would still have been unprofitable servants; and this conviction fastens on every man, as soon as his eyes are open and his heart is softened by the Spirit of God.

When a man's heart is changed, he, as I said before, does indeed act and think far differently from what he did before, and he steers a far better course; but, alas! Tom, the best course that any man ever steered towards heaven was but a sorry one. It is with the real Christian as it is with a man at the helm; he watches every motion, and sees every coming up and falling off of the vessel, while those between decks are ignorant how she goes. You, Tom, are a good helmsman, and yet you know that, with all your care and eyes about you, when steering before a hard gale and heavy sea, you cannot keep the ship from yawing to starboard or port of her true course. Now and then, indeed, for a little while, she may run quietly, and "steady, boy, steady," is the word; but in how short a time she is running broad again! And as soon as the helm meets her one way, she is flying off too much the other, and sometimes it is as much as you can do to prevent her broaching to. Just so it is, when a man sets about steering his heart, his thoughts, his words, and works, by the compass of God's holy word. He wishes all to be what his kind and gracious Father in heaven would have it. He comes up, as it were from the blindness and unconcern of a sleeper between decks: he watches all that passes within and without him, and longs that all may go on in a straight and even course towards the port of heaven; but, alas! he perceives many a thwarting current. He finds ten thousand hinderances from the world, the flesh, and Satan, which, like the swell of a heavy sea, continue to follow him every minute; and these make his spiritual course very wide of what it should be, and of what he earnestly desires it to be; so that he is sure his best performances are not, cannot be worth heaven. Whatever the unconcerned and unconverted sleeper below may think, he cannot go with his goodness in his hand, and say, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and let a good-hearted man come in."

No, he casts away all such empty and presumptuous trust, and looks to God for pity and pardon on some other account than that of his own good heart or good actions. He feels what St. Paul felt, that, "when he would do good," when he would give himself up wholly and continually to God, "evil is still present with him;" and, like the apostle, he sometimes groans under the burden of remaining sin, and exclaims, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Tom. Harry, I am satisfied that I shall no longer be puffed up with the pride and vanity of thinking my heart is good. God knows that things are as you have described them. I begin to see and feel that this pretended good heart of mine has all my life been as constantly turning to evil as the needle to the North and South. And if such altered men as you, and the chaplain, and St. Paul can never get to heaven by your works, what must become of me?

Harry. You must fly for shelter to him who is able and willing to save. You must go to Him to whom St. Paul went, and in whose robe alone he wished to be clothed, to Him to whom our kind chaplain tells us that he looks for his own salvation, and unto whom he so earnestly entreats us all to go. He can, he will, save to the uttermost all who really and truly seek his salvation.

Tom. Who is it? Tell me, Harry. Oh! if I was sure he would look favorably on me, I would go to him, though a hundred four-and-twenty pounders were turned against me.

Harry. As to his willingness to receive and to save your soul, there can be no doubt, if you are but willing to be saved by Him *alone*, as a lost sinner. For he came into the world to save sinners, to seek and to save them that are lost; and he invites all who are burdened and heavy laden to come unto him, and promises to give them rest. You

ask who it is? Why, man, it is *the Lord Jesus Christ*, the same of whom our chaplain speaks in all his sermons and his conversations with us. Don't you recollect how he preached about him last Sunday, from Acts 4: 12? "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name given under heaven, whereby we can be saved." Don't you recollect how he told us that "this blessed Saviour was the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and that no man could come to God but by him?" Why, Tom, I thought it was enough to warm every heart, when he showed how Jesus Christ came from heaven, and suffered and died in our stead, and how he now reigns in heaven to hear our prayers, and to pardon our past sin; how he sits at the right hand of God to send down the Holy Spirit on purpose to change our hearts, and to instruct and strengthen, lead and comfort us, through all our days of health and sickness, through life and in death, even until he receives us into glory. Were you asleep, Tom, or did you not hear what he said?

Tom. I was not asleep, but I was worse: I was thinking about other things, and neither heard, nor understood much of what he said; though now you mention these things, I recollect he told us of some such matters. But then, you know, if I had been seen attending much to them, my messmates would have laughed at me, and therefore I have gone on from week to week, disregarding every thing about my soul, just as though I had no soul at all.

Harry. Ah, Tom, I know what it is to be carried down that current. I was long as negligent a hearer as yourself, and as much afraid of a laugh as any man could be; but, thank God, I have, in a great measure, got out of these snares. Nay, I can tell you, that at the time when I neither knew nor cared about my soul, or about heaven, or the tender mercies of God my Saviour, the devil put it into my head to think that religion was a sad, mopish, melan-

choly thing, quite unfit for a lad of any spirit, and that it was a kind of disgrace to be seen reading the Bible.

Tom. Why that's just what I always thought; but since you have been talking to me, I feel convinced that a man should take care of his soul, although every person in the ship laugh at him; for surely, if a person gets to heaven at last, it will make up for all his sorrows and sufferings in this world.

Harry. No doubt of that, Tom. But I perceive you still think there is something sorrowful and gloomy about religion. Now tell me plainly, Tom, don't you think there is something dull and melancholy in the Bible?

Tom. Yes, Harry, I do; though after what you have said about its being the word of God, I feel I ought to regard it very much; yet I don't know how it is, but I think I can never delight in it as you do.

Harry. Well, Tom, I think otherwise. I hope and trust the time will soon come when you will read your Bible, not as a boy reads his task-book, but with delight, with prayer and with praise. No doubt, Tom, when a man first discovers his dangerous state, as a poor, helpless, undone sinner, he will be concerned. No doubt, when he learns that "the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God," he will be much perplexed and troubled about his soul, and joy and peace be far from him. I hope you will be led to see more of your need of a Saviour, more of the nature of heaven, more of the vileness of sin, more of the vanity of every thing this world has to offer. I hope you will be led to feel more of your own weakness and proneness to depart from the living God; and then, Tom, you will undoubtedly be more thoughtful than you ever were before, and your heart may sometimes be cast down with sorrow. But, if you sincerely pray to God for help and instruction, if you do indeed set yourself to overcome your sins, and live to that Saviour who loved you, and

gave himself for you; then, Tom, you will surely obtain a portion of that inward peace which the world can neither give nor take away. You will not indeed join the drunken, noisy, profane companions of your past days; for their enjoyments will no longer suit you. But you will have more comfort, and experience more happiness and joy, in the society of Christians, and in reading the word and singing the praises of God your Redeemer, than any of these noisy men ever did, or ever will, experience in their sinful mirth. Remember, Tom, that you have a soul which must be happy for ever in heaven, or miserable for ever in hell. If, therefore, the saving of your soul involved you in wretchedness all your lifetime, it would be your duty and wisdom to encounter that wretchedness. But this can never be: the ways of "wisdom," as I have already reminded you, "are ways of pleasantness." Satan will tell you that religion is a gloomy thing. O, Tom, never was any thing more false than such a report. For myself I can say, I have never been so happy as since I have learnt that "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Do you think, Tom, that my religion has made me wretched?

Tom. No, Harry, I am certain it has not. To be sure, you don't rant and sin between decks, or dance and drink in the gin-shop, like many others, but then I have often wondered to see how you bear with cross and vexatious things; you are always in a good temper; every thing seems to go smoothly with you; and though some of our foolish fellows call you over-religious, yet all the officers, and most of the crew, think and speak well of you.

Harry. I have great cause to be thankful for the kindness I meet with from my shipmates and from the officers; but, Tom, I have greater comforts than these. I have got my crosses and trying things to meet with, as well as other men; but here is my comfort, God enables me to bear them much better than I once did. Through the help of God, I

have overcome the sins of drinking, and swearing, and discontent, and I feel happy in that station, and in that lot which his infinite wisdom has appointed for me; for he has promised that *all things* shall work together for good to them that love him. This, Tom, was not the case before I learned somewhat of my own heart from the Bible. No, I well remember how my mind fretted against God, and how I considered myself unjustly dealt with by him, when his providence permitted me to be pressed and torn away from my dear Jane, so soon after our marriage. I was long discontented with and hated every thing and every body on board a man-of-war. Grog then became my stupifying friend, or rather my worst enemy, and it often brought me almost to the gangway; thus I went on in a course most wretched and most sinful, until God in mercy showed me the state of my heart, and the danger of my soul, and at length gave me the comfortable hope that he had pardoned my sins, and was willing to receive me into his everlasting kingdom. Then, Tom, every thing put on a different appearance; I saw I had many blessings and comforts beyond thousands of mankind. I blessed his holy name for sending me where I could hear the Gospel of his dear Son, and for thus making the very place I so much disliked, the place where my soul should be brought to seek its everlasting peace. Since that time, things have gone on, as you said, more smoothly than ever they did before; my Jane has become a Christian, and though I can but seldom see her, her letters continue to instruct and comfort me. Our greatest delight on earth would be to dwell much together; but the providence of God sees fit, at present, to deny this. Still we encourage each other to wait patiently his time; and the Bible has taught both her and me to look beyond the present life, with hope and confidence, that after a few short years we shall meet to part no more. We are not the only pair who are separated by the present state of the times. War and its evils are now

desolating many a country, separating many friends, and filling the hearts of many families with troubles, greater, Tom, than any of yours or mine. But then, this blessed Bible, this book which you think is like to make a man melancholy, this, Tom, informs us, and I firmly believe its report, that by and by, "Swords shall be beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks; that nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Isaiah 2 : 4. Is this melancholy news?

Tom. Harry, your talk makes me feel I don't know how; I wish I was like you. What a fool I have been to think such things about religion and the Bible as have been in my mind! I always thought you had the best wife of any man in the ship, but yet I thought she would have been better without so much religion; now I perceive it is religion which has made her so much better than the others, and you so much happier than myself. I think I would sail all around the world for such a wife; but then, if I found one, she would not be taken in tow by such a wicked wretch as Tom Brown.

Harry. Don't be disheartened, Tom; if you do but seek first and most earnestly the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all other things will be added unto you; for so runs the promise of God himself. Matt. 6 : 33. And when you get a virtuous, godly wife, many a shilling will stay in your pocket, which now finds its way out; and many a temptation will be removed, which now presses hard upon you.

Tom. All this I believe, and the sooner it happens the better; but, Harry, when is that piece of joyful news to be told the world? Do you expect to see the day when there shall be no more war?

Harry. Perhaps not; it is not said when the thing will happen, only that it is to come to pass. It may be my lot ere then to fall in defence of my country; but this does not

trouble me. Others that come after will see and enjoy that blessed season, while I shall be still more blessed than they, because, I trust, I shall be with the Lord in that kingdom—

"Where all the ship's company meet,
Who sailed with their Saviour beneath;
Where, shouting, each other they greet,
And triumph o'er sorrow and death.

The voyage of life then will end,
And mortal affliction be past;
The age that in heaven we spend,
For ever, and ever, will last."

My present chief concern, therefore, is, to be found at my post; as a man, doing my duty to my king and country; and as a Christian, standing with my lamp trimmed and my light burning, that in whatever way my Lord may call me hence, I may be ready to obey the summons. Thus I am delivered from all distracting anxiety about life, and from all fear and dread of death. I am thankful for my many mercies and comforts, and I am enabled to bear up with tolerable ease under occasional hardships and trials. Therefore, Tom, if you should live to see me fall in action, or in any other way, never let it be said that religion and the Bible unfitted Harry Williams for doing his duty, or made him wretched and melancholy. But here come the officers and boat's crew; be smart, and toss up the mast; we shall be off directly.

SECURE ANCHORAGE.

Now I have found the blessed ground,
Where my soul's anchor may remain;
The Lamb of God, who for my sin
Was from the world's foundation slain:
Whose mercy shall unshaken stay,
When heaven and earth are fled away.

O love! thou bottomless abyss!
My sins are swallowed up in thee;
Covered is my unrighteousness,
From condemnation now I'm free;
While Jesus' blood, through earth and skies,
"Mercy, free, boundless mercy!" cries.

With faith I plunge me in the sea;
Here is my hope, my joy, my rest!
Hither, when hell assails, I flee,
And look unto my Saviour's breast:
Away, sad doubt, and anxious fear,
Mercy is only written there!

Though waves and storms go o'er my head,
Though strength, and health, and friends be gone:
Though joys be withered all, and dead,
Though every comfort be withdrawn;
Steadfast on this my soul relies,
Father, thy mercy never dies.

Fixed on this ground I will remain,
Though my heart fail, and flesh decay;
This anchor shall my soul sustain,
When earth's foundations melt away:
Mercy's full power I then shall prove;
Loved with an everlasting love.

No. 88.

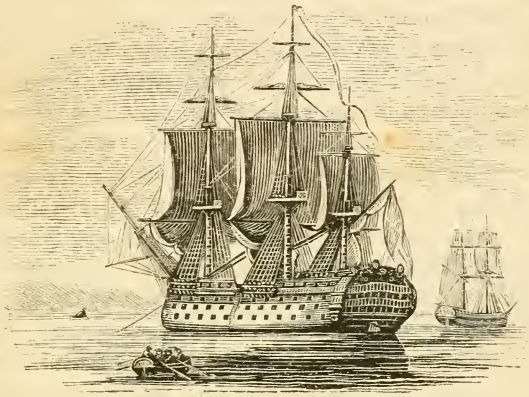
THE SHIPMATES.

A SUPPLEMENT TO

THE TRACT ENTITLED CONVERSATION IN A BOAT.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

FORMERLY A LIEUTENANT IN THE ROYAL NAVY.



PERHAPS the reader may have seen a Tract entitled "*Conversation in a Boat, between two Seamen,*" named Harry Williams and Tom Brown, when they belonged to the happy Repulse. Now, if he has read that account, he will have learned that the Repulse had a fine young man for her chaplain, and that many of the officers and seamen delighted in seeing the church rigged out on Sundays, and in frequently looking into their Bibles, when duty and circumstances would admit; so that the Repulse's crew were well acquainted with what was right and good; nay, the reader will remember that they not only had a knowledge of these things, but that they acted agreeably to the principles of the Bible.

I know it seems strange with some officers and men, how religion can make a place or people happy; yet the thing is true: for the religion that was on board the Repulse, had so cured the greater part of her crew of getting groggy, using bad language, and neglecting their duty, that it was a rare thing to see a man in irons, or brought to the gangway. At first, indeed, the officers hardly knew what to think of such religious ways; but, by and by, they found so many of the crew leave off their bad tricks, that they were forced to say, religion had done them good. In short, the duty, both at sea and in harbor, went on so well, that, from the captain down to the youngest midshipman, the officers were quite proud of the men, and the men were very fond of their officers. But it must not be thought that all hands were religious: no; for there were many on board who still loved their old ways, though they were a little ashamed and a good deal afraid to be seen pursuing them, since things went on so quiet and orderly about them.

Harry Williams, as the reader may recollect, was quarter-master and cockswain of the Green Cutter; Tom Brown belonged to the same boat, and pulled the stroke-oar. Harry was as fine a seaman as ever took a marlinespike in hand; and, as may be seen from the account there given of him, he was a very sensible and godly young man, and much respected by all the officers. Poor Tom Brown was a thoughtless, and what the world calls, a jovial fellow, never so happy as when he could get into a grogshop, to dance, and sing, and fool away his money. As to another world, or what might befall him on the morrow, he left these matters to other people, to think of as they pleased: his cry was, "A merry life, and a short one." In this way Tom went on for some time, until Harry Williams got into conversation with him one day at Lisbon, where the boat was waiting for the officers.

That conversation, which is put down in the little book mentioned above, made Tom begin to think in earnest about another world, as well as this; and, as he frequently afterwards got into chat with the cockswain, and other serious men, on the subject of religion and a future judgment, he, by the grace of God, became more and more an altered man, until it was plain to all on board, that he not only did his duty like a good and brave seaman, but that he honored, loved, and served God, and took great delight in reading his Bible, and attending on the instructions of their good chaplain, whenever he could. This was as it should be; but I am sorry to say, it was what some of the crew did not like. In that number was Joe Long, who belonged to the gunner's crew. He was a sad, reprobate fellow, and always tried to turn religion and the Bible into ridicule; and so he continued until peace, when the ship was paid off, and all hands were separated.

When the Repulse went into port, to strip and return her stores, the captain advised the crew to remit all their wages home, excepting what was necessary to bear their expenses on the road. This all the serious men did: and, as soon as they were landed, and had shaken hands, and wished each other God speed, they shaped their various courses towards their respective homes. Some of the crew, however, would not act so wisely. Joe Long, and several more of his sort, regarded neither the captain's advice nor the kind chaplain's parting admonition, to go home and comfort their old fathers and mothers with some of their money. They would take all their wages at the pay-table, and stay, and have fine doings before they parted. So they remained at Portsmouth, till some had spent the greater part of what they had received, and others had either got through the whole, or had it picked out of their pockets.

As for Joe Long, he was not sober for a week, and per-

haps would not have been for a fortnight, had not his wicked female companions robbed him of all that was left; and then, having no more dollars to hand over to his landlady, he was soon turned out of doors, and reduced to sobriety against his will. In this situation he remained for some time, making it out as well as he could, by getting a lift from one old acquaintance and another, until they had all moved off, and left him without a single person to pity or relieve his case. About that time a vessel was on the point of sailing for Bristol, Joe's native place; and, as he begged very hard to be taken on board for his victuals, the captain gave him a passage, out of mere pity, seeing what a miserable plight he was in. Joe had often, in his life, wished for a fair wind to blow him into port; but now he was truly sorry to find himself so soon at his destination. He was ashamed to go home, and a berth was not to be got on board any vessel in the port.

The chaplain of the Repulse had again and again reminded him and the rest of the crew, that "those who despise the counsel of the Lord, shall eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices," Prov. 1: 31; and now that verse seemed to tingle in his ears, which is in the fourth chapter of Jeremiah, "Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee; this is thy wickedness, because it is bitter, because it reached unto thy heart;" and truly he found it so. For here he was without money, without a berth, without lodgings, and often without food, with no clothes but what he had on his back, and these he had spoiled and torn in his drunken bouts at Portsmouth. Poor Joe! you might have seen him wandering about the quay, sometimes getting a job for a day, or half a day, and then none at all. As to lodgings, as I said, he had none, having no money, and being ashamed to go home to his poor parents, who were expecting him to come and assist

them with some part of his two years' pay, which they knew he had to receive. This being the case, he was forced to look out at nights for some shed, or lee corner, to lie down under, till, what with half starving by day, and want of lodgings at night, he soon began to look more like a ghost than like Joe Long.

Things were, however, going on very differently with Harry Williams and Tom Brown. Harry had formerly served his time out of Shields; but, for some time before he was pressed, he had sailed out of Bristol, where he married his excellent little Jane. Of course, to Bristol he directed his way as soon as he was clear of the Repulse. Tom Brown, having lost his father and mother while a lad, and being still a single man, cared little more for one port than another; and being so fond of Harry's company and conversation, he was unwilling to part with him, even when they came on shore. Well, what does he do, but takes coach with Harry; and down to Bristol they both steered, and fetched that place in less than twenty-four hours' run.

And now the reader will perceive the truth of what the Bible says, that "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." 1 Tim. 4: 8. Yes, let foolish and profane fellows think or say as they please, Godliness does well for a man now, and will do better for him hereafter. Harry had received such good certificates from the officers, that some pious merchants in the city rejoiced to stand his friend; the consequence of this was, that, in less than a week, he got a first mate's berth on board the Good Intent, a fine ship of nearly five hundred tons burthen, in the American trade; and, as the captain, with whom he now lived and messed, was a religious man, Harry was as comfortable as the days were long. Nor did he forget his old shipmate, Tom

Brown; but recommended him to the captain, and got him shipped as sail-maker on board the same vessel. And thus Tom not only got a good berth, but had his heart's desire, in again being shipmate with his old friend Harry, or rather Mr. Williams, as we now ought to call him. All this fell out in consequence of these two men being serious Christians; for the merchant who owned the Good Intent was determined not to bring a curse on his ship and cargo, by putting them into the hands of a set of blaspheming reprobates of officers and men, when he could get persons of Christian character to go on board.

While the Good Intent was lying at the wharf, taking in her cargo for New York, one evening, as Tom Brown was going into the city, whom should he meet but his old shipmate, Joe Long! At first Tom hardly knew him; so thin in the face, so dirty and miserable in his whole appearance was he, that he looked, as I said before, more like a ghost than like what he was when on board the Repulse.

"What!" said Tom, "is this Joe Long? Joe, my lad, what cheer?"

Joe was quite taken aback at this unexpected meeting; for he was as much ashamed of his miserable appearance and condition as he was rejoiced to fall in with one, who, he hoped, would give him a shilling; so that he did not answer directly.

Tom, however, being now sure of his man, seized his hand, and shook it heartily, saying, "Joe, my boy, I'm glad to see you; though, by your rigging, I fear you have had but rough times of it since we left the Repulse."

"Rough indeed, Tom," replied Joe; "here I am, no money, no ship, no lodgings, no friends, living on short allowance one day, and the next without any thing to eat. Rough times indeed, Tom. Who would have thought I should so soon have come to this? I am quite weak and

faint for want of food; and every bone in my body aches, with laying on the ground at nights, without a hammock or covering."

Tom Brown was no chicken-hearted fellow. The reader may be sure, that all the threats of Bonaparte's army could not have forced a tear down his face; but, when he surveyed poor Joe from stem to stern, and heard him tell such a mournful tale, a big tear stood in his eyes, and he drew his jacket-sleeve across his face, to rub off that tear which was about to roll down his manly cheek. Knowing, however, that pity of itself can never feed the hungry or clothe the naked, without further ceremony he seized Joe by the arm, pulling him along, and saying, at the same time, "Thanks be to God, I have got some shot still in the locker; come along, my boy, to the next eating-house, and get whatever will do you good."

This was a welcome invitation, indeed, and most readily complied with. Tom did not interrupt him by conversation while he was eating, unless to insist upon it that he should not spare the rump of beef. But, though Tom did not as yet say much, he thought a good deal, and could not help lifting up his heart to God, and thanking him that his mercy and providence had provided him with food and raiment, a good ship, and a Bible hope that, when he had done the voyage of life, his soul would be for ever happy in heaven. Nor could he cast a look on poor Joe without offering up a silent prayer that the prodigal might be brought to his right mind, and be received into his heavenly Father's house.

At length the rump of beef being removed, and the decks cleared, Tom put a number of questions to Joe, and received the whole account of his Portsmouth frolic, how the sharks had robbed him, and turned him out of doors, and how he had gone on, up to that very evening; concluding what he had said, by honestly telling Tom, that he had

often slighted both him and his good advice, when on board the Repulse, but that he had often, since that time, felt how much better it would have been for him had he followed it: and he hoped the other would forget and forgive all that was past.

"Well, Joe," replied Tom, "as to all your former slights of my advice, since I only persuaded you for your own good, I never felt any other than sorry for you when you disregarded what I said; and I am sure this is no time to be angry, even if you had really offended me; for I am much grieved to see you in such a trim. Joe, I am sorry for you, both with respect to your soul and your body; and I wish that matters could as easily be put to rights in the one as in the other; but sit you still, I'll be with you again directly."

Here Tom got up, and going into another room, ordered a person to go, with the key of his chest, immediately on board the Good Intent, with directions for the second mate to send a shirt, jacket, handkerchief, pair of stockings, and trowsers. This done, he again returned to his companion, and continued:

"Joe, I wish you well, and always did so, even when you set yourself so much against our good chaplain's advice, and the little I sometimes said to you. And now my heart and my pocket are open to serve you. But I must again repeat the old story, that, however you may now rub through the difficulties of this world, if you do not turn to God, and repent you of your sins, if you do not get them blotted out in the blood of God's dear Son, and receive from him a new heart, your soul will be lost for ever; and that will be worse than all the hardships and difficulties which you have suffered, or can ever suffer, in this life. I can't talk to you about these things like Harry Williams; but, Joe, it grieves me to see a young fellow like you ruining both soul and

body by turning your back on the Bible, and on Jesus Christ, and what he has done for sinners. Many a man has done so before you; but, here is the evil, many of them stayed till they were in hell before they repented it, and there sorrow for sin comes too late."

Joe replied, "I know all this is right and true. I know very well, that had I taken the advice I so often received from one and the other on board the Repulse, I should not have been as I now am. It has cut me to the heart, since then, to think how I scorned my best friends. Yes, Tom, when I have been strolling about the quay, hungry and pennyless, and when I have been shivering on the ground at night, I have often thought of my sad conduct on board the Repulse, and I have said to myself, God has brought it home to me at last."

"Indeed, Joe," said Tom, "it looks like it. I don't wish to upbraid you, or to say any thing unkind; but you know how sadly you used to laugh at the Bible, and at all who read and loved it; and now it does seem as though God had brought things home to you at last. I say this, Joe, to make you sensible how much you have injured yourself, and stood in your own light, by fighting against God."

"I know it, Tom," replied Joe. "I have made God my enemy by standing out against him, when my own conscience told me you were right and I was wrong. I followed the counsel and company of those who told me that they were my friends, and that they would show me how to live a happy life; and now I find, to my sorrow, that their ways led to poverty and shame here, and, moreover, set a man in the fair road for that wretchedness in another world, which I once laughed at, but which I now believe to be intolerable. I have found, to my sorrow, that while a man has got money to squander, he is sure to have many who

call themselves his friends; but, Tom, when the money is gone, the friends soon go too. See how they have served me. See what happiness they have led me to, and how they have stood by me in distress! 'A friend in need is a friend indeed;' and now, the first such friend that I have found, is Tom Brown, whom I used to turn my back upon in my days of jollity. Tom, I have used you very ill. I have been a great fool, and a great sinner. When all the world went smooth with me, I laughed at religion and the Bible; but, when distress came upon me, I found, that if ever I got any thing like comfort to bear me up under misfortunes, it must come from the Bible. I then, as you know, despised that book; and now, if I had one, I think I should really be afraid to look into it. Since I have been brought into my distress, the thought has often come into my mind, and I have often said to myself, 'Ah! the Bible is true; it is all true, what the chaplain and some of my shipmates told me; and that Bible condemns me.' Thus, Tom, I have been unhappy in mind, and you may see how I have been in body!"

"Well, Joe," replied honest Tom, "if your troubles lead you to pray to God for pardon for the past, and for his assistance to help you to do better for the future, I shall not be sorry that you have smarted a little under the rod. But what do you think of doing? Have you no prospect of a change for the better?"

"I don't know what to do," said Joe. "My mind is unhappy, and my body is weakly; and I cannot get a ship. There is nothing of work doing that falls in my way; and to beg from door to door I am ashamed. Could I get down to a king's port, I would try to get on board a man-of-war; but then I have no way of getting there, unless by begging; and if I fetched a port, there is little hope of being accepted, in my weakly and ill-clothed state—so I don't know what

to do. If I had not met you in the street, I must have skulked under some wall (as I have often done, starved with hunger and cold) all this night. If you can help me out with a lodging for a few nights, I hope something may turn out for the better; and then, Tom, I will make you all the amends I can. But that will be but little, in comparison with your kindness to me, who have so often slighted you."

Here Joe's heart seemed quite full, and he could say no more; nor did Tom want to hear any more. He would rather be doing a kind action than listening to a long tale of thanks. He therefore broke off the discourse by saying, that, so long as he remained in port, he would cheerfully comply with the request, and that a good bed should be provided directly; "but," says Tom, "I was this evening going to a place of worship, where I generally go on Wednesdays; and, as I find it very good and edifying, I could wish, Joe, that you would go with me. The time is nearly up, and I can chat a little after we come away. Will you go?"

Joe cast a pitiful eye at his dirty, torn clothes, and replied, "My rigging is not fit for any place where decent people meet: I'll stay here till you come back."

"Come with me," said Tom; and, taking him into another room, "there, Joe, turn to, and wash your hands and face. Here's soap, and here's water, and here's a bundle containing a few things for a change; bear a hand, and rig yourself out, and then you will look something like Joe Long once more. Bear a hand, I say, instead of looking at me, and let us go and hear something that may do us good."

Joe could do nothing but thank Tom for his kindness, and repeat his promises of making all the returns he might ever have in his power. As to Tom, he said little else

than, "Bear a hand, and let us be off." When they were in the street, Tom seemed quite delighted at Joe's improved appearance, and more so still at the thought, that he was going to hear the word of God as well as himself. He had never seen Joe so humbled down before, and he could not but hope that the Lord would fasten convictions on his mind that night.

When the text was given out poor Joe felt like a criminal at the bar. It was from Galatians 5 : 19, 20, 21. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like : of which I tell you again, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

"Surely," said Joe to himself, as the minister went on, explaining and applying the text, "this is the same account which I so often heard from our chaplain on board the Repulse ; and I am a condemned man." In this state of mind he sat till the service concluded.

"Well, Joe," said Tom, as soon as they were out of the crowd, "What think you of what you have heard to-night ?"

"Why," answered the other, "to be sure, the minister seemed to bring all that I ever heard on board the Repulse, right against me at one blow. Tom, I have been guilty of many of those things which are to shut the doers thereof out of the kingdom of heaven ; and I feel I am a condemned man in the sight of God. In the morning I was a poor miserable fellow in my body, and now I am no better in my soul. This is what I have got by abusing the Bible, and good friends, and good opportunities, when I had them."

Tom was rejoiced to hear Joe talk at this rate ; for he

knew very well that there is no hope of a man's going to Jesus Christ, as the Physician to cure his soul, unless the man feels his spiritual disorder. In other words, Tom knew that God does not pardon a man's sins, and heal his soul of its infirmities, until the man is brought to confess his sins, and cry for mercy. And, therefore, since Joe appeared to be in some degree sensible of his lost condition, he hoped these convictions would go on, and deepen, until they sent forth the cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" and until that cry brought down into the soul the answer, "Be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee; depart in peace!" He therefore did not try to persuade Joe that there was no need to be uneasy; but, on the contrary, he told him plainly, that he was a child of wrath by nature, as well as others, Eph. 2: 3; that he had lived at enmity with God, and that, therefore, the wrath of God had been all his lifetime hanging over his head, and that it did so to this hour. "Only," says Tom, "here is the difference; in former times you did not believe this to be your case, and now God has made you believe and feel that it is so, to the end that you may cry for and obtain mercy and forgiveness, which I most earnestly hope you will experience, through the renewing of the Holy Spirit."

By this time they were at Joe's lodgings; and Tom, having ordered all things that were wanted, and put a few shillings into his companion's pocket, said, "I must now wish you a good-night. It is time for me to be on board; come to-morrow, and get your dinner with us in the steerage, and we will look out for a birth among the shipping, and I hope we shall succeed—good-night—don't forget to be on board in time." Thus saying, Tom left his companion and flew on board, anxious to tell Harry all that had happened, and in what state of mind he had left poor Joe.

"Well," replied Harry, when he had heard Tom out, "well, Tom, all things are possible with God, and, if Joe does but turn out a true penitent, we know that, though his sins have been as the sands upon the sea-shore for multitude, the blood of Christ Jesus *can* and *will* cleanse and blot them all out. I am glad you asked him on board; he will have another opportunity of seeing that we wish him well. But, Tom, I must and will go halves with you; at least, in bearing his expenses, until something turns out for the better."

"That," said Tom, "may be just as you like; but as for the money, why it does one's heart good to spend it in relieving those that are really in distress. I sometimes think I should like to have a chest full of dollars on purpose; and I often think, if I now had some of that cash which I once fooled and squandered away in watches, silver buckles, rum, and all manner of wickedness, how many suffering creatures it would be of use to."

"That's very true," said Harry. "That money, if properly laid out, would have made many a poor heart glad; but it is gone! You and I were, for a long time, very wasteful stewards of those things which God put into our hands. Instead of spending our money, like Christians, to the glory of God and the comfort of others, we spent it in the service of the devil. And O! if we had then been called away to give up our account, what would have become of us?"

"Become of us," replied Tom; "why, we should have been sent to spend an eternity with the wasters of God's bountiful gifts, with swearers, and drunkards, and adulterers, and whoremongers, and all those who, like ourselves, turned their backs on Christ and heaven. That's what would have become of us. For the Bible says, 'The wicked shall be turned into hell; and all the nations that forget God.' It says again and again, that such sins as

we then lived in will sink every man into the bottomless pit who does them; unless, by repentance towards God, and faith in Jesus Christ, he obtain a full pardon before he dies. So it is very easy to find out what would have become of us."

"You are right, Tom," answered Harry; "and never can we be sufficiently thankful for the tender mercies and long-suffering of our heavenly Father; that long-suffering bore with us year after year, and those tender mercies at length subdued our hearts to the love and obedience of his will. But it is getting late; and as we must be moving pretty early in the morning, we must now say good-night."

They then retired to rest, in peace with God, and in peace with all mankind: while poor Joe Long passed a very restless night. He had a good bed and warm lodgings, to be sure; but then his conscience was awake, and that would not let the body sleep. He lay, and thought first of one thing, and then of another: at one time of the sermon he had heard; and then, of what he had often been told on board the Repulse; and all made against him. "O! if I was but like Tom Brown, or Harry Williams, how happy should I be!" Thus he mused, and talked to himself, and got up in the morning, fully convinced that no bed can give rest and peace to a man whose spirit is wounded by the arrows of the Almighty.

At length the time came for going on board the Good Intent; he therefore went down to the quay, found her out, and received a hearty welcome from Tom, who was on deck at the time. Here they chatted a little while, till Harry himself came up from the cabin, and, with all his old good-nature, shook Joe by the hand, and bid him welcome on board. Poor Joe was almost confounded at this; for he expected that Harry would either take no notice of him, or else that he would scold him for his past bad con-

duct. But, instead of this, he found him as free and as kind as ever, and heard not one word of upbraiding; but, on the contrary, many expressions of sorrow at the rough times he had passed through since they left the Repulse.

"Ah! Harry," said Joe, after he had a little recovered himself, "I don't deserve this kindness from you; and if you were not a real Christian, I should not receive it. I have been a great fool to myself, a most ungrateful man to my best friends, and a great rebel against God. And now you see what all this has brought me to! My pretended friends have plundered and forsaken me; and those I once neglected and abused, are the only people who notice me in my distress."

"Well, Joe," replied Harry, "don't rake up old grievances; I hope you have at last learned a lesson that will be useful to you all your lifetime. Depend upon it, Joe, if you are on the look-out for a real friend, for a man who will be 'a friend in need, and therefore a friend indeed,' you will be far more likely to find such a one among those people who love and fear God, than among all others in the world. And you may be assured, that, if ever you possess any thing like happiness on this side heaven, it must and will be in loving and following the Lord Jesus Christ, and not in the way you have hitherto gone in. I have tried both ways, Joe. You have only tried one, yet you may believe me. But go down with Tom; the cook is taking up the steerage dinner; by and by, when you have dined, I have a little to say to you by ourselves."

Accordingly, when the cook had cleared away the bowls and platters, Harry called Joe aft on the quarter-deck, and said, "Tom has given me an account of all that has happened to you. Again, Joe, I am really sorry for you, and most heartily do I wish I may see you a happier man, and in better circumstances, both as to soul and body. Yet I

am certain there will be little ground to expect this, unless you 'seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near.' The invitation is, 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.'"

"That is very encouraging," said Joe; "and I thank you for your good wishes and good counsel. Had I followed your advice in times past, I should not have been the man I now am. But I now fear there is little hope of my escaping the hell I once laughed at and despised. I feel, Harry, that God is angry with me; and this is worse than all my losses and poverty put together."

Harry had never, till this day, heard Joe discourse in such a strain of humility; and he really believed that it came from his heart: therefore he proceeded to acquaint him that, as one of their crew had received a hurt that morning, and would not be able to proceed on the voyage, they should ship another person. "As to choice of hands, you know," said Harry, "we have plenty; but, Joe, if in your heart you think you can approve of and comply with the regulations of this ship, I will speak to the captain to enter you on our books. You must understand, that no oath, or drunkenness, or ridiculing religion and the Bible, is allowed here. We meet every evening for prayer in the cabin; and on Sundays we shall endeavor to serve the Lord, so far as our circumstances at sea will allow. The merchant who owns the ship, and the captain who commands her, are both godly men; and as for myself, you very well know how I like to go on. Therefore, don't come among us, unless you think differently, and are determined, by God's help, to act differently from what you did on board the Repulse. I will give you money to help out till you can get some other ship, if, on con-

sideration, you think you cannot go on smoothly with us here."

"Well, Harry," replied Joe, "it ill becomes me to boast, or make great promises of being good; but this I can say, that I have experienced too much the deceitfulness of ungodly men, and now I feel too much of the bitterness of sin, to allow of my plunging into my former course or mixing with deceivers again. If there were twenty ships waiting for hands to-day, I would choose to go where the crew were godly men; although I fear I shall never be like them myself. I wish I were like Tom Brown, or yourself, in these matters; but I fear God has been too much offended ever to regard me."

Joe was quickly entered on the Good Intent's book, and the ship sailed in two or three days after for New York. Being now out at sea, the time for meeting in the cabin for evening prayer was eight o'clock. On these occasions, the captain read a portion of Scripture, and said a few words on it; then either himself or Harry prayed; the watch then went on deck, and the rest of the crew to their hammocks. It happened, on the evening they put to sea, that the captain read from the fifth chapter of St. Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians: "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," and so on to the end of the tenth verse; which, when he had finished, he said,

"My lads! the real Christian has joys and sorrows which the unthinking world knows nothing about. The world, the flesh, and the devil assault him grievously, and often make his feet slip, and sometimes almost beat him out of the strait and narrow path of life. These conflicts make him groan, and long for the day when his fighting and his dangers will end. Like other men, he has to strug-

gle with the pains and decays of his body, to meet with many a calamity, many a sad disappointment in the bosom of his own family, and among his most particular friends. Yet, under all these, his soul is kept and supported by the presence of God. Strength is given him according to his day; and though he has to say, 'Many are my afflictions,' yet he also can add, 'The Lord will deliver me out of all.' What, above all other things, bears his mind up under trials and calamities, is, the confidence that, by and by, he shall be with his Saviour in heaven. This was what made Paul, and his brethren at Corinth, rejoice in tribulation. They knew that if their earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, they had a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; and many a man can say the same at this day. God gives to the penitent sinner, not only a pardon, but an evidence of it; 'the Spirit of God beareth witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God.' Rom. 8: 16. I hope and trust that some here present are in possession of this blessing, and I hope that all will be so, before they are much older. Think, my lads, what a cordial this is, and will be, to bear us up under all we may have to meet with! What a sweet Scripture is the first verse of this fifth chapter of Corinthians for a man to begin his voyage with! We are again on the wide sea, and God only knows whether we are ever to tread the dry land again. We have to-day left our dearest earthly friends behind. Our Christian companions and the house of God are now out of our reach; and the mighty deep once more rolls beneath us, and stretches itself on every side. This deep may or may not become our grave before the present voyage is done. But what of all this! Suppose the eyes of those who saw us to-day are to see us no more in this world; suppose death is, this voyage, to end our race; what cause have we to grieve, what room have we to fear, if we can

say, that we have the witness of the Spirit of God that our sins are pardoned, and that, if the house of our earthly tabernacle be dissolved during this voyage, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens? This experience of God's love and pardon in our souls will cast out all anxiety and distracting cares for life, and all slavish fear of death; it will make the voyage pleasant while it lasts, and happy when it is over."

Thus ended the captain, and shut up his Bible; they then sung a hymn; and Harry offered up a short prayer for the providence and mercy of the Lord to keep them in safety, to pardon all the transgressions of the day, and to bless them with refreshment of body and peace of soul, through Jesus Christ. And so they concluded.

And now poor Joe felt, more than ever, what a difference the love and fear of God make between one man and another; that is, how much happier the follower of Christ is, than all other people; and he would have given the Indies if he could have laid his hand on his heart, and said, "I know that if my earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, I have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." But, alas! he could not do this. All he felt was the weight of his sins, and the anger of God resting on him. And, as the old saying tells us, "One trouble seldom comes alone," so Joe found it; for almost as soon as the ship was clear of the land, he fell ill. The sudden change from a state of half starvation to good living brought on a fever, and his life was, for some time, in danger. Then it was that his soul was troubled indeed.

"Oh, Harry!" said he, "what will become of me? What must I do? My body is sinking into ruin and death, and my soul is stained with ten thousand sins; and I must shortly appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, to receive

according to the things done in my wicked life. Oh, what shall I do?"

"You must look to Jesus Christ, who died for sinners," replied Harry. "You must look to Calvary, where the Son of God died, the just for the unjust, that he might save poor, guilty rebels, like you and me, from destruction."

"O, but I have sinned against him so grievously," replied Joe; "you know, Harry, how I slighted all the good counsel I received on board the Repulse; how I scoffed at the Bible, and cast the Lord behind my back. You know, and God knows still better, how I have indulged in many of those sins of which the Bible says, the doers thereof shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. And you know there is but one other place, and that is hell. O, my sins, my sins; how shall I appear before God! Harry and Tom, *you* will both go to heaven, but *I* shall be cast into hell. You have taken me into your company when I deserved to be turned far adrift; but God will not let me be with you long here, and I fear I shall never meet you in a better world. Pray for me, both of you. I don't want to get rid of my pain, or my burning fever, or to live to have any thing this world has got to give. No! I only want a pardon, and to be suffered to love that Saviour whom I have crucified by my sins!"

Poor Tom was a good deal affected, and could say but little; and Harry felt as much as Tom, but he strove to keep down his own feelings, that he might the better give some counsel to his afflicted comrade.

"Joe, my dear fellow," said he, "remember, there are two ways by which the devil tries to ruin every soul. The first is, by persuading them to go on in the love and practise of sin. And then, when he can no longer do this, he turns the tables, and tempts them to despair of mercy. One day he says, 'Sin away, no harm will befall you;' the next day he says, 'Now, there is no hope, God will never forgive

you.' But what says the God of truth, the Saviour of sinners? 'Come unto me, *all* ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.' Now, Joe, this heavy laden state means the state of a man like yourself, who feels the burden of his sin lying heavy on his soul, and the thirsting state means the state of one who longs for mercy and salvation, as you do. Well, then, endeavor to obey Christ's invitation—cast yourself at his feet—cry out, like poor, blind Bartimeus, 'Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me,' and, believe me, you will not go and cry in vain. The poor penitent thief on the cross no sooner turned his dying, weeping eyes to Christ, and under the weight of his sins prayed, 'Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom,' than Jesus not only granted him a pardon of all his trangressions, but promised him a place in paradise. And what says the Bible? 'Come now, saith the Lord, let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin.' His blood can cleanse you from yours; that fountain can make you clean. Nothing can destroy you but a love of sin, and a keeping away from Christ. He came to seek and to save them that are lost and dead in trespasses and sins. He came to pardon all the past, and to give them a new heart and a right spirit to serve him in faith, in love, and obedience for the future. He says to *all*, 'Come; whosoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely.'"

In this way did Harry from time to time discourse with him; and Tom often read the Bible by the side of his hammock, and encouraged him to look unto Jesus, who prayed for his very murderers. But it was several days before Joe could lift up his head, or receive any comfort. At length,

however, the Lord answered his prayer, and give him a sweet hope that his sins were pardoned. And now, his heart was filled with the love of God, and his lips with his praise. Nay, his mind was so tranquil and happy, that it greatly assisted towards his recovery; and before they reached America he was able to do day duty. Nor did he, like many men, turn back to his old ways when he recovered. No; God had restored him to health and strength; and he gave that strength to the service of God, and to the doing of his duty in that state of life in which it had pleased God to call him. He lived to be a comfort and support to his old father and mother, and to instruct them too in things concerning their souls. He was much respected by his superiors, and beloved by his equals. Whenever he passed by the grogshops and saw a set of drunken, swearing seamen, and wicked prostitutes, his heart would melt with pity for them. "Poor creatures!" he would say, "the bitterness of these things will by and by be felt; you are serving a hard master—for 'the wages of sin is death.' O, that you did but know the comfort and joy of serving the Lord Jesus Christ!" Joe was a most contented fellow. His Bible was his dear companion in all his leisure hours, and the worship of God was his chief delight. No man could be more grateful for his earthly comforts than he; yet his heart was mainly above, and he would often, when walking the deck, look up to heaven, and say,

"There is my house and portion fair,
My treasure and my heart are there,
And my abiding home;
For me my elder brethren stay,
And angels beckon me away,
And Jesus bids me come."

As for Harry and Tom, the reader may be sure, they were exceedingly happy to find Joe turn out so well. Indeed, they lived and sailed together in the utmost harmony, and the Lord prospered them in their honest, upright dealings; so that they could say, each for himself, "Thou art my hiding-place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." Psalm 32: 7. Often, too, would they speak a word in season to their shipmates, saying, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Galatians 6: 7, 8. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." 1 Peter, 5: 8. "O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him." Psalm 34: 8.

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THE

LIFE AND CONVERSION

OF

THE DAIRYMAN.

BY REV. DANIEL TYERMAN,

SINCE ONE OF THE MISSIONARY DEPUTATION TO THE SOUTH SEAS, CHINA, INDIA, ETC.

The DAIRYMAN'S DAUGHTER is well known to a large proportion of the Christian world. The Tract which details her life with so much simple elegance, has not only been read with avidity by all classes of society in Great Britain and America, but has been translated into most of the languages of Europe. Nearly seven hundred thousand copies are now (1816) in circulation.

While we read that pleasing Tract, a desire is excited to know something more of the Dairyman himself, the good old man who several years survived his excellent child. It is the design of this narrative to gratify such a desire. Some have supposed that the *facts* related of the Dairyman's Daughter are too highly wrought, and that the *scenery* described is an ideal picture. From a long residence on the island where the scene lies, and an intimate acquaintance with all the objects decribed, I can assert the accuracy of Mr. Richmond's delineations; and that what he has related of the *subject* of his Tract is by no means exaggerated.

NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT, April, 1816.

JOSEPH WALLBRIDGE, the Dairyman, was born in Dorsetshire. When about twenty years old, he engaged in service in the Isle of Wight, where he spent the remainder of his days. As a servant he lived with different farmers, by whom he was greatly esteemed for his diligence and good

behavior. When about twenty-seven years of age, he married; and by his own industry as a day-laborer, and the assistance of a little shop kept by his wife, he obtained a comfortable subsistence.

For many years he lived at a cottage about a mile south-east of the village of Arreton, in the Isle of Wight. To that cottage were attached six acres of ground, for which he paid an annual rent of six pounds. An acre or two of the ground produced him corn, the rest was pasturage. By this farm, and a little occasional assistance from some other resources, he brought up a family of two sons and two daughters with decency, and gave them all a little schooling. He followed the two daughters to the grave; both of his sons survive him.

In his dealings, he was remarked for strict uprightness. Even before his conversion, he appears to have acted under a high sense of integrity. He had formed no extravagant habits. His day was spent in labor, and his night was passed at home, in the enjoyment of his family and his fireside, and in recruiting exhausted nature during the lonely hours which elapsed between early retirement and early rising.

He was a man of great veracity. Simplicity, integrity, and freedom from deceit, were strong features in his character. And while he paid a strict regard to truth himself, he carefully inculcated a love of it upon his children. One day conversing with his eldest son in the garden, when he was a very little boy, he said to him, "Robert, be sure you always tell the truth; let nothing induce you to tell a lie. Should it even cost you your life, be sure that you speak the truth"—an admonition which made so deep an impression on the lad's mind that he never forgot it.

But while we see so much to admire and love in the character of the Dairyman, he was yet a stranger to true, spiritual religion. His "heart was not right with God;" and he was afterwards enabled to see that, had he died at this period, he must have perished. He became conscious

that all his morality availed nothing with God, while his mind was at enmity against him. On the Sabbath, indeed, he desisted from his accustomed labor, and, in common with his neighbors, paid the usual visit to his parish church. But he did not "remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy." He was not in that happy frame of mind which harmonizes with the holiness and spirituality of the day. As he went to church, he joined the company of those who were going the same way; they talked over the price of cheese, butter, and eggs; they made their observations on the weather, and mentioned who was ill, and who was dead. When they arrived at the churchyard, they spoke of the crops, and the prospects, and the state of the markets, till the bells chimed, and they hastened to their pews. But "God was not in all their thoughts."

Observe the Dairyman while professing to worship the Searcher of hearts. He said his prayers with a mechanical skill, which had been rendered uniform and accurate by the practice of more than half a century; but he never prayed with the heart. With his lips he confessed his sins, but he failed to repent of them. He stood in some parts of the service, and knelt in others, for it was customary; and not because he meant to express any correspondent frame of mind, or was at all influenced by a devotional feeling. The minister read the Scriptures and preached his sermon, while the Dairyman slept, or looked around him, or thought of his horse, and his cows, and his poultry. The benediction was pronounced, and he went home well satisfied with himself, though in the sight of God an unconverted sinner, unacquainted with the way of life, and exposed to the wrath to come. He closed the Sabbath as he had begun it, having the form of godliness, but ignorant of its power.

The Dairyman lived in this state the whole of the first seventy years of his life; amiable, outwardly moral, but only a formalist in the worship of God. About this period his eldest son was awakened to a sense of the value of his soul and the importance of real religion. Brought up under

the eye of his parents, he had been preserved from many evils, and was also moral in his conduct. But he began to see that something more was wanting, and that "one thing was needful," which he did not possess, to make him truly happy—it was vital religion. This he now sought with ardor. Feeling the value of his own soul, he became anxious for the souls of his parents, and looked upon them with fear and solicitude. Seeing their danger, he warned them "to flee from the wrath to come." One day, as they were going to church, the son began to converse with his aged parent, and spoke of the importance of a change of heart: "Hold your tongue," said the old man, "we are good enough; we go to church on Sundays, we pay every one his own, we do nobody any harm; what more can be required?" So great was the confidence which he had of his own safety at that time; while he feared that his son was going mad, because he doubted the sufficiency of his father's religion, and wished to obtain a better for himself.

The eldest daughter was from home in service. Providentially she was brought to hear the Gospel, which was rendered the power of God to her conversion. No sooner did she feel the power of religion on her own soul, than she began also to be very anxious for her parents, whom she considered in the most dangerous state, without God in the world. Soon after, she wrote an affectionate letter to them. The old folks now began to think that madness had tainted the blood of their children, and were afraid whereunto this evil might grow. In this first letter the daughter told her parents the surprising change which she had felt, the means by which it was produced, and the great distress which she suffered on their account. While the father was reading this letter, the son stood behind his chair, looking, also, over its contents. While he saw such religious sentiments in it, and the pious strain in which it was written, he rejoiced, and wept, and prayed that what she had written might be blessed to his father's conversion. But no visible effect was then produced upon him.

The Dairyman had a very amiable disposition. He was placid, gentle, and inoffensive. He was seldom ruffled by the affairs of life. This amiableness continued even to old age, when, generally, the infirmities of a sinking frame occasion a peevish fretfulness. For some years he had lost the use of one eye. His white locks, and a cast of features which harmonized with the serenity of his mind, gave him a venerable appearance.

How far may persons go in outward show, and yet, alas, be destitute of true religion! How affecting to consider the Dairyman, notwithstanding his venerable appearance, his amiableness of mind, and his inoffensive life, destitute of the knowledge of Christ! His heart had not been touched by the finger of God. No heavenly ray had yet enlightened his mind; no heavenly affections had warmed his bosom. He thought all was well, because he stood well with himself and the world, though the law of God condemned his conduct as void of religious principle, and his soul as being without repentance towards God and sincere faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

How great the danger of self-deception! How often do persons who are eminent in morality, mistake it for true religion! This was the affecting case of Joseph Wallbridge. He was just, in the esteem of mankind, and hence imagined that he was justified before God. But true religion does more than make us outwardly moral. While it prescribes holy laws for the life, it governs and sanctifies the heart; while it calls on us to abstain from the *appearance* of all evil, it enjoins it upon us that we hate all evil; while it teaches that we should do no harm to man, it requires that we serve God from the heart. To the *form* of godliness it adds the spirit and the *power*. It makes the life moral, by making the heart holy.

The soul of his excellent daughter was now full of holy affections and sacred zeal. Her parents were the first whom she selected as the proper objects of both; and they afterwards regarded her as the honored instrument of their con-

version. The principles of divine grace which she had been the means of planting in the mind of her father by her epistolary correspondence, first began to develope themselves in the following manner.

"As I was walking in the fields, and looking at the objects of nature," he said, "I began to think of God and his perfections. My mind was much affected with these thoughts, and I soon felt that I was a great sinner. I was brought into deep distress respecting my state, which continued for some time. I began to pray in earnest, and to read the Scriptures with care; and at length, through faith in Jesus Christ, I obtained peace and comfort."

The reality of the Dairyman's conversion, which he so briefly described, was clearly evidenced by the change which followed. Neither the preceding relation, nor any other, however striking and remarkable, would have evinced a change of heart, unless it had been followed by the fruits of holiness. If true repentance, and humble dependence on Christ for pardon of sin and acceptance with God, and a devout and holy life, follow, as was the case with the Dairyman, we have no reason to question the reality of conversion, however simple the process.

The means employed in the conversion of sinners, and the period of their effectual application to the mind, are alike to be resolved into the sovereign pleasure of God. But it is observable that he generally adapts the means to the peculiar structure of the mind, and to habits acquired during the former life. A furious, persecuting Saul must be filled with horror and distress by the application of the law to his conscience. An amiable John was as effectually drawn by the cords of love. The Dairyman more resembled the latter than the former, both in his natural disposition and in the means of his conversion.

The unfolding of the work of divine grace on the heart, after it is begun, is equally of God. The influence of natural objects may be traced, yet the finger of God is present, though invisible. In the case of the Dairyman we see this

remark illustrated. He was reading the volume of nature. The trees, the hedges, the flowers, the blades of grass which surrounded him, engaged his attention. He inquired, who made these? He saw God in them all. But, said he, what is God? He is an infinite Spirit; he is a Being of perfect purity; he sees and knows me. But what am I, that he should look upon me, and take care of me? O, I am vile! I have sinned against him; my heart is all impure. My life, however moral it has been, is full of sin; it becomes me to repent in dust and ashes!

Such, it appears, was the development of the work of grace in the Dairyman's mind. His former life had been spent in a round of formal duties, but now his vain hopes were shaken: he felt himself to be a guilty and perishing sinner. He saw that Christ was the only Saviour, and was enabled sincerely to trust in him. He thus obtained that "peace which passeth all understanding."

During his first convictions that he was a lost sinner, and exposed to everlasting misery, he labored under great disadvantages. He lived in an obscure situation in the country, remote from any place of worship where the Gospel was preached in its purity, and very seldom had an opportunity of hearing the way of salvation pointed out by a faithful minister. At the place where he had been accustomed to attend on the Sabbath, that doctrine only was preached which had left him in a state of dangerous satisfaction with his spiritual condition for so many years. Here was nothing either to awaken conviction of conscience or to afford support and consolation.

Providentially, however, his daughter soon returned from service. She brought home a heart warmed with that religion which she so eminently adorned in a holy life. The sentiments which she had inculcated by her epistolary correspondence, she found had arrested the attention of her father; and while she afforded all the assistance which was in her power in the temporal affairs of the family, she did

not fail to seek their spiritual good. Her conversation, her prayers, and her example, were of great service in deepening and carrying on the good work in the soul of her father, who was happy to enjoy the instruction of his own child.

This circumstance affords two examples worthy of imitation. The one is that of the father. Though *great age* generally unites with the *authority* of the father in repelling any attempts made by his offspring to offer instruction, yet in the present instance he gave an attentive ear to the instructions of his daughter, feeling that in the concerns of religion she was better taught than himself. Nay, he was not only *willing*, but even *anxious* to receive her instructions. In such cases it is wise in parents to become the disciples even of their children.

The other example is that of the child. The daughter treated her parents with all possible deference and respect; and in assuming the office of a teacher, she did not forget the duties of a child. She availed herself of every opportunity to promote the future, as well as the present, welfare of her parents. The Dairyman's daughter was, at the same time, decided in religion herself, and zealous to make others so. While she was writing letters to almost every person in the neighborhood, with whom she was acquainted, she did not forget those who were dear to her by kindred ties. And she was a great blessing: God gave her the souls, there is reason to hope, of *both* her parents; and her holy conversation, her fervent prayers, and her devout life, were also blessed to their further edification, after their conversion. Let the young reader follow her steps, and be encouraged to hope for like success.

The dutiful, affectionate, and wise deportment of the daughter, endeared her greatly to her parents, and seemed to render her continuance with them essential to their happiness. But "God seeth not as man seeth." This young woman, so high in the affections of her parents, was soon called home to a better world. They sustained an irreparable loss in her death; but they bore it with submission to

the will of God, recollecting that their loss was her gain. Under this, the greatest affliction which the good Dairyman had hitherto met with, he maintained his usual placid and serene frame of mind. A breach, however, was made in his domestic comfort; for he had lost an able counsellor, a faithful friend, and a child indefatigable in her endeavors to promote his welfare.

The eminent clergyman who honored the Dairyman and his family with his friendship, and the memory of the daughter with so engaging a narrative, preached at a church too remote from the old man's cottage to allow him the benefit of his ministry. Besides, that faithful servant in his Lord's vineyard, soon after the death of the young woman, was removed from the village where he preached, to a distant county. The good old Dairyman was now bereft of his best friends. He had few opportunities of religious instruction, or of hearing the Gospel preached with that clearness and decision which his state of mind required; but he embraced every opportunity of hearing those who approached the nearest to the truth. He spent eleven or twelve years in this state of obscurity. The ardor of youth was gone, and "the grasshopper had become a burden." He had to contend with the trials of the world. He had no affectionate pastor to feed him with the bread of life, and no kind friend near to admonish him of danger, and to aid him in his progress. He had to learn the holy art of walking with God, when old age had benumbed his faculties, and how to contend with the powers of darkness, the depravity of his heart, and the delusions of the world, when he needed the consolations of religion.

Let the youthful reader from hence learn the danger of delaying repentance. Life steals insensibly away, while mere trifles employ our attention. Eternity opens upon us, while we are making vows and promises to prepare for it. Few reach the advanced age of the Dairyman; and how rarely do those who are spared so long without religion, seek it then. Sinning for such a length of time produces dread-

ful hardness of heart. Rather, like Timothy, and Josiah, and Samuel, and the Dairyman's daughter, take Christ now for your portion, and consecrate the vigor of your days to him.

Let the aged also mark the patience and mercy of God. He bore with the Dairyman, in an unconverted state, for seventy years. He had neither faith in Christ nor love to God, without which it is impossible to please him. But he obtained forgiveness through the merits of Christ, whose "blood cleanseth from all sin." Such instances of late conversion are very rare, though frequent enough to encourage the most aged to come to Christ. The Scriptures speak of one man who obtained mercy at the close of life, that none might despair; and of one only, that none might presume. Let aged sinners no longer presume on the forbearance of God, but immediately repent and seek mercy at his hand.

A few months after the death of his excellent daughter, the Dairyman was called to follow his wife to the grave. They had travelled forty-six years together through this vale of tears, sharing each other's joys and anxieties. They had accompanied the mortal remains of their two daughters to "the house appointed for all living;" but they "sorrowed not" over them "as those who have no hope." Now the time came, when she must also be separated from the good old man, and be forbidden to soothe his last days.

Her declining days, there is good reason to think, were blessed with the consolations of religion. This greatly softened the pain of separating. They looked to a moment not far off, when they should meet again.

Who can sufficiently estimate the importance of the conversion of any individual of a family? The cheerful tidings of life and salvation were brought home to the Dairyman's cottage by the daughter. She went from home a stranger to religion. Providence brought her under the sound of the Gospel. The Spirit applied the word, and it was the

means of her conversion. She began to feel all the solicitude of an affectionate child and zealous Christian towards her parents and her kindred; she wrote to them, she returned home and conversed with them, warned them of their danger, and pointed them to a refuge: they listened to her entreaties, repented, and lived. Let this striking instance of zeal and success be remembered by other young Christians.

While the daughter discovered great anxiety for the conversion of the mother, the husband was by no means indifferent. One afternoon, the Dairyman and his wife were taking a friendly cup of tea at a neighbor's house, where there was to be some religious exercise in the evening. At that time the maxim of his wife was, "Be not overmuch righteous." A little formal religion for a few minutes once a week was considered quite enough. The Dairyman was aware, that as the time of the intended service drew near, his wife would withdraw; and to prevent this, stepped to the door, locked it, put the key in his pocket, and returned to his chair. When the old lady was making her escape, she found the door locked; and though not without some vexation, she returned, and continued during the service. This little violence on the part of the amiable husband, had the desired effect; for she was always glad afterwards to enjoy such opportunities.

After the death of his wife, the good old man continued to attend to his little dairy, as before. His wife was not; Elizabeth was not; Hannah was not; and Robert and William had left their father's house. Yet he was not alone, for God was with him. This period of solitude was closed by his youngest son's returning to live with him. He brought along with him a wife and one child. They took the duties of the dairy upon them, and this relieved him from many of his anxieties.

As the infirmities of old age come on, it is a privilege to have our beloved offspring around us, to take upon them those cares and duties of which we are no longer capable.

Our children thus repay the obligations which they had contracted in their youth. The obligation is mutual, and perhaps equally difficult to discharge. These remarks may show the great importance of both parents and children cultivating towards each other the most ardent affection, and exercising mutual forbearance. If parents do this towards their children when young, they may rationally expect that their children will repay it in tender affection and kindness, when they are old. The Dairyman was a very tender and kind parent, and until his last breath he enjoyed the constant and affectionate attentions of his children.

Mr. Wallbridge continued with his son at his cottage until within two years of his death, when he removed to Newport, to close his pilgrimage at the house of his eldest son. He then began to attend my ministry; and it was from that time that I became personally acquainted with him. When he first appeared in the place of worship I did not know him; but I was greatly struck with his venerable aspect, and soon learned that he was the old Dairyman. He was bending under the infirmities of eighty-two years, and supported himself with a staff which had long been his companion. His milk-white locks, and his amiable and serene countenance, rendered him a very interesting figure.

After attending on my ministry a short time, he was taken ill, and sent to request that I would visit him. Cheerfully I obeyed the summons. I had not before enjoyed much religious conversation with him, and from some intimations I had received, was not without fear that I should find him reposing in his morality, and knowing nothing of a change of heart. I thus beheld him with pity, and felt the great importance of immediate fidelity.

When I entered the little room where he was sitting, he exerted his feeble limbs, rose to receive me, and seemed much pleased at my arrival. After making a few inquiries as to the nature of his indisposition, I said to him, "You appear, sir, to be far advanced in the journey of life, and to be near eternity."

"Yes, sir," said he, "I have seen eighty and two years; I cannot expect to live long."

"It is a solemn thing to die and to give an account of ourselves to God."

He replied, "I feel that it is."

"To those who have no hope of heaven," said I, "death is very terrible."

"It is, indeed, sir."

"As you must soon quit this world, what is your hope that you shall be happy in the next?"

"O, sir, all my hope is in Christ; I have no hope besides."

At hearing this I began to feel a confidence that I had mistaken his character, and to entertain a better opinion of his religion.

I continued my interrogations: "But, sir, you have been, I suppose, a very moral character; do you not place *some* dependence on your good works, to save you?"

"O no, sir, I am a poor, unworthy sinner. I can do nothing of myself. All my dependence is placed on Christ alone to save me."

"You have kept the Sabbath, you have prayed, and read the Scriptures; you have been just in your dealings—do you not place *some* dependence on these things, as well as upon Christ?"

"I have made a point of these things; but it is Christ, and his merits alone, that can bring me to glory."

"Do you not love the Lord Jesus Christ, then?"

"I hope I do."

"Then I suppose you have felt yourself to be a poor, undone sinner."

"Yes, I am a very great sinner; and sin is mixed with all I do."

"Do you think that you have sincerely repented of your sins? To repent, is not only to be sorry for your sins, but to forsake them. Have you thus repented?"

"Yes, I think I have, and hope that the Lord has forgiven me."

"But heaven is a holy place, and we cannot enter it without a change of heart, and being made holy: do you know any thing of this change?"

"Some change, I hope, has taken place in me. I cannot take pleasure in sin: I hate it; I wish to be made holy."

The conversation was long and highly interesting. My inquiries were such as to ascertain his Christian experience, and his views of religion. He appeared to acquiesce most cordially in the terms of salvation, and to approve of it as a system of free and sovereign grace. He seemed to me to be taught of God. I never was more satisfied with a first interview. In closing the conversation I endeavored to confirm his view of the great principles of the Gospel; and enforced upon his attention the duties of self-examination, prayer, the reading of the Holy Scriptures, constant meditation, and habitual preparation for death. I read a chapter suited to his condition; and offered supplication for the aged saint.

It pleased God to restore his servant to the enjoyment of his wonted health; and to permit him to appear again in the sanctuary. Having constant opportunities now for a while of enjoying public ordinances, his religious character appeared rapidly to improve. The word was greatly blessed to his edification.

But the period of these privileges was of short duration. It was soon to close. One day, walking over some rough stones, he fell, and received a violent bruise upon the hip. This was fourteen months before his death. From that time he was confined to his bed, from which he was only occasionally removed. He suffered considerable pain for a while, from the injured part, though afterwards the pain subsided. As soon as I heard of the accident I called upon him. He was in bed, and in great agony; but tranquil and resigned.

It was chiefly from this time that his religious principles and character were most conspicuously unfolded. Visiting him frequently, and enjoying his confidence and a frank

disclosure of his feelings, I had every opportunity of forming accurate ideas of his personal religion.

The Dairyman's religious views were strictly evangelical, being drawn immediately from the Sacred Scriptures, by a mind, I doubt not, under a divine influence. I never detected an error in sentiment, or a distorted view of any doctrinal or practical truth. This accuracy was the more remarkable, as he had enjoyed so little advantage from public means of instruction. He was happily delivered from a self-righteous spirit, and expected to be justified before God through the righteousness of Christ. The person and work of Jesus were the foundation of his hopes; and he was anxious to erect on this foundation a holy edifice. While he was diligent in the performance of every Christian duty, he was careful not to pervert its design by hoping for salvation from it. The doctrine of the Trinity, the atonement, the influence of the Spirit, the new birth, repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, were among the leading sentiments of this venerable saint.

All the essential features of Christian character were evident in Joseph Wallbridge. There were seen in him contrition for sin, humility, love to God and his people, meekness and submission to the will of his heavenly Father, and that spirituality of mind which is life and peace.

The manner in which he bore his long affliction was truly exemplary. He discovered entire resignation; in patience he possessed his soul. He was never heard to utter a word of discontent, or express the least want of submission to his situation. Frequently asking him whether he was still resigned to the Lord's will, he generally answered me, "Yes, sir, but I wish to be gone."

On inquiring, as I often did when I visited him, how he had been since I saw him last, his reply generally was, "Comfortable." He was enabled to "set his affections upon things above," and to spend his lonely hours of day and night in prayer and meditation.

For every act of kindness which was shown him, he dis-

covered gratitude. Many friends and strangers called upon him. He was thankful for their kind attentions, their prayers, and every other expression of their affection and sympathy. One day I perceived a small donation which some kind friend had dropped among the bed clothes, instead of putting it into his hand. On giving it to him, his countenance brightened, and discovered a striking union of surprise and gratitude. To his affectionate son and daughter-in-law, whose attentions to him were incessant, he felt sincere thankfulness, and often expressed to me his sense of their kindness.

He took great delight in family devotion. When at any time his son was prevented from assembling the family in the good old man's bedroom, he was much distressed; and if ever he discovered discontent, it was at those times. Where should a dying saint look for consolation, but to his heavenly Father?

At length the powers of nature began to indicate the very near approach of death. He complained often of fever; his sight failed; his hearing became dull; his articulation was so indistinct that, the last time I saw him, though there was something which he wished to say—and he made several attempts—it was in vain. Yet he seemed to remain in the same happy frame of mind. A few days after, the Dairyman sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, in the eighty-fourth year of his age. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

[The earthly remains of Joseph Wallbridge were deposited in the burying-ground at Arreton, with those of his wife and his two daughters. On the Sabbath after, I improved his death in a funeral sermon to a crowded audience, at his request, from Psalm 66: 16. "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul."]

No. 90.

A WORD IN SEASON.

It is the character of the wicked, that "through the pride of his countenance, he will not seek after God. God is not in all his thoughts." May we ask, Is this your character? Have you ever seriously considered the shortness and uncertainty of all earthly things? Have you thought of the consequences of death, which you know awaits you? Or are you living without God in the world? acting as if there was no God, to whom you must give an account of your thoughts, words, and actions? But what can the world bestow? How uncertain are all its enjoyments! Riches make themselves wings, and fly away. A man is to-day in full health; to-morrow he is gasping on a death-bed. Death spares neither rich nor poor, young nor old; there is no discharge in that war. We know not what a day shall bring forth.

Are you, my friend, prepared for death? You know you are a sinner. Have you any reason to believe your sins are pardoned? Or do you turn away your thoughts from this subject? By this means many keep their minds easy. But is this like a rational creature? A criminal may get drunk, and forget the day of his execution; but will this prevent it? You may be drunk with the cares or pleasures of the world. You may ridicule those whose attention is occupied about the salvation of their souls, who do not run to the same excess of riot with you; but remember, every breath you draw brings you nearer eternity. Every hour you pass without laying to heart the things

which belong to your eternal peace, is an aggravation of your guilt. It is treating God with contempt, despising his long-suffering.

Why, think you, has he not already cut you down? Why were not you in the place of your companion, whom you have followed to the grave? He bade as fair for life as yourself, but now his doom is fixed. God has given you a respite, and what use do you make of it? You trample on his commandments; you despise his ordinances; you employ the time his long-suffering affords you in this world, to add to your guilt, as if you were afraid lest the wrath of God were not sufficiently kindled against you for past sins. You "despise the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth you to repentance." Thus you employ the time he graciously affords, to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

Do you say we are drawing a character different from yours: that you are sober and honest; that you do not ridicule religion, but believe the Scriptures to be the word of God? If you believe the Scriptures, either you have experienced an entire change of heart, your character is perfectly different from what it was formerly, or else you must be convinced that the wrath of God abideth on you. The Scriptures, almost in every page, declare the absolute necessity of a change of heart. He who is now your Witness, and will very shortly be your Judge, assures you, that without this entire change of heart, this being born again by the power of the Holy Spirit, no man can enter into the kingdom of God. You may take the name of Christian, or, if you prefer it, you may call yourself an angel; but the name will make no difference in your character in the sight of God. Men are not saved by assuming any particular name, but by believing in Christ; and if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is not a believer, he is not interested in Christ's salvation.

Perhaps you do not ridicule what *you call* religion; that is, a religion which does not condemn your conduct, which flatters you with the hopes that God will wink at your sins, your worldly-mindedness, your neglect of prayer, your habitual indifference about eternity: a religion which teaches you, that if you do not habitually indulge in gross sins, all will be well; which quiets your conscience with the thought that you are no worse than your neighbors: a religion which encourages you to think favorably of yourself; that, although you are a sinner, your heart is good in the main, and that God will accept you for your sincere, though imperfect, endeavors to serve him: a religion which leads you to attend the minister who is nearest you, or whom your father attended, without comparing the doctrine he preaches with the word of God, or judging by his life and conversation whether he be a minister of Christ. Perhaps your religion teaches you that it is unnecessary to be very scrupulous about these things.

If *such* be your views of religion, no wonder you do not dislike it. Yours is a religion exactly suited to the taste of an enemy of God and of righteousness. But do you never ridicule the religion of those who talk much of the corruption of their hearts, of the necessity of the renewing and sanctifying influences of the Spirit? Who say that God could not be just, if he passed by even one sin without showing his displeasure; who tell you that if you are living like your neighbors, you are in the high road to destruction; that all your endeavors to recommend yourself to God are vain; and that, laying aside all your sobriety and decency, as a ground of confidence, you must come to Christ for pardon exactly upon the same footing as if you had been guilty of murder and every crime? Do you not ridicule those who show an anxiety to hear men who insist much on particular doctrines, which you do not understand, and whose standard of Christianity is much higher than yours? Who say a Christian must be very strict and circumspect,

must worship God in his family, must pray much to God, and converse much upon religion; yea, that such things are the Christian's delight and happiness? Do you never ridicule some such people for meeting together for prayer and reading the Scriptures, on a week-day, after their work is over? If so, you are ridiculing the religion of Christ, although you may call it enthusiasm or madness. The name you give it is of no consequence. We do not suppose you hate the *name* of religion. But if a great change has not taken place in your heart, we are as sure that you hate the religion of Jesus, as we are that our Bibles are true; for they tell us that "the carnal mind is enmity against God;" that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him." Remember how the Jews rejected Jesus Christ, while they pretended great zeal for God, whom they called their Father and their God; and take care, lest, while you call yourself a Christian, you account the true doctrine of the cross a stumbling-block and foolishness, and the sentiments and practice which spring from the belief of this doctrine to be hypocrisy, pride, and uncharitable judging of others.

Beloved, our heart's desire and prayer for you is, that you may be saved. If you are indeed taught of God—and without this you cannot be a Christian—you will not be displeased with our plainness of speech; you will acknowledge, that such as we have described was your former character; that you hated both God and Christ; and that, but for his goodness in opening the eyes of your understanding, you had been still in this temper of mind. But if you imagine you were never so bad as this, be assured, you are still in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. The first part of the work of God's Spirit on the heart, is to convince of sin; not merely showing a man he is a sinner, for this is allowed by all; but convincing him, that his "heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Till a man is convinced that this is a just description of his heart,

he does not believe the word of God. If you therefore think there is any thing good in your heart by nature, you make God a liar, and his word is not in you.

They that are whole have no need of a physician. You must entertain thoughts of yourself very different from what men naturally entertain, before you come to Christ for salvation. Many *say* they believe in Christ; they think they cannot be saved without him; but all they expect from him is *his assistance to save themselves.* Such assistance he will never bestow. He died for the wretched, the miserable, and helpless; for those who were "without strength." His death is a complete atonement. He hath finished the work of redemption. Men try to lay a foundation for themselves; their good works, their alms, their prayers, their tears, their future amendment; but all these will prove refuges of lies, which the hail shall sweep away. But the man who depends on the death of Christ alone for pardon and acceptance with God, who ceases from looking to his own works, and looks to the works of Christ for salvation, shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

Is this your character? Have you given up all confidence of escaping the wrath of God, because you have been free from gross sins, or because your character is good among men? Do you see that one offence justly and inevitably exposes you to the wrath of God; that your life has been a continued course of rebellion against him; that your most admired actions were deeply stained with guilt; and that you can only escape condemnation through Christ, who died, the just for the unjust?

If such be your sentiments, assuredly you must love Christ; and if you love him at all, it must be with a supreme affection. Is this the case? Are you ready to forsake all for him? Is it your daily study to testify your regard for him, by obeying all his commandments? Have you begun to deny yourself, to take up the cross and follow Christ? Do you, like Moses, esteem the reproach of Christ

greater riches than the world can bestow? Or would you be ashamed of being thought more religious than your neighbors? Perhaps you are afraid of being laughed at; but, remember, that he who thus denieth Christ before men, shall be denied by him, when he would willingly court his approbation. If you will be his disciples, you must love him more than father or mother, or wife or children, yea, than your own life.

And is he not worthy of such love? He who, "though he was rich, for our sakes became poor?" the eternal JEHOVAH, who dwelt among men, and purchased his church with his own blood? Did the God of glory take on him our nature? Did he bleed and die for rebels and enemies? And shall we think it a great return for such love, to prefer him above all this vain world can bestow? Was ever sorrow like the sorrow he endured, when the Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all? when his sweat was as it were great drops of blood; when in an agony he prayed in the garden; when he cried out upon the cross, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Is it not a mockery to talk of believing these things, and not to be affected by them?

Do you know the power of God's wrath? Have you weighed the consideration of an eternity of woe? Do you believe what God declares, that the voluntary sufferings of Christ prevented the destruction of the whole world? that if you escape damnation, it is wholly owing to what Christ has done? Have you a hope of escaping, and can you refuse to love him supremely on whom alone such hope must rest? Have you considered the long-suffering of Jesus, whose name is daily blasphemed in the world: who yet still continues to invite his most inveterate enemies to be reconciled to him; spares their lives; loads them with benefits; assures them of pardon and righteousness, without money and without price? While they spurn his benefits; treat his invitations with contempt, going one to his farm and another to his merchandise; seeking for happiness where it never

can be found; he mildly reasons with them: "Wherefore will ye spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."

Allow us to ask, Have you found the satisfaction in the world which you expected? No; you have been, you must be disappointed: and will you yet persevere? Will you not listen to Christ, who bestows durable riches and righteousness? Let us beseech you, reader, by the mercies of God, not to ruin your soul. Behold in Christ a Saviour exactly suited to your need? You are guilty; he hath made atonement. Your heart is hard and impenitent; he is exalted to give repentance and remission of sins. With him is the residue of the Spirit; he can change your heart. Cast yourself on his mercy, depend on him alone, and you shall have your fruit unto holiness, and the end shall be eternal life. Sin shall not have dominion over you.

You may in earnest resolve to forsake sin, but in time of temptation your resolutions will be forgotten. If you desire to be holy—and without holiness no man shall see the Lord—be convinced you cannot sanctify yourself, and apply for help to Christ. He came to save his people from their sins, and thus to make them meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. If you could do this for yourself, you would have no need of Christ. Trust then in the Lord Jesus, and you shall not be disappointed. Be it known unto you, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all things. They are imbued with his Holy Spirit; they become partakers of the divine nature, and escape the corruption that is in the world through lust.

We refer you to the Scriptures for the truth of what you have read. A man who had lived in every abomination, said, on his death-bed, that the *love of sin* was the only weighty objection against the truth of Scripture. Take

care lest the love of the world, or the love of sin, should continue to harden your heart against the word of God. Beware lest you love the praise of men more than the praise of God.

The Gospel of salvation through Christ is the touchstone which discovers the temper of the heart towards God. If you remain without making your eternal salvation the chief object of your concern, or if, after having heard the Gospel, you attempt to save yourself, by any thing you can do, thus going about to establish your own righteousness, you show yourself an enemy to God, and a despiser of his grace, and if you die in that condition, you are lost for ever.

Now, God beseeches you to cast down the weapons of rebellion, and to be reconciled to him. He declares his amazing love to sinners, in not sparing his own Son; and if this does not melt your heart, you are undone. It is the only medicine which can cure your soul. If you reject this, there is no remedy; "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour" you as an adversary of God. But if you really believe on Jesus, the effects of this faith will be a satisfactory evidence, both to yourself and others, that you have not followed cunningly-devised fables, but that it is the true grace of God wherein you stand. All sin will be hateful in your eyes. The love of God shall increasingly be shed abroad in your heart. Prayer will be your delight instead of being a burden, and all shall take knowledge of you that you have been with Jesus. Thus, through faith in him who overcame the world, you shall be more than conqueror; and having triumphed over death, the last enemy, you shall sit down with him on his throne; you shall inherit all things, and he will be your God for ever.

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PRAYER AND FAMILY RELIGION

FROM AN ADDRESS

BY REV. BENJAMIN TRUMBULL, D. D.,

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Beloved Brethren and Friends—Prayer is not only an indispensable duty, but an inestimable privilege. It is an important part of that worship which all men owe to God, and so essential to religion, that without it there can be none. It affords the noblest relief and support to the Christian in all his dangers and distresses: it is an important means of his growth in grace, of communion with the Father of his spirit, of overcoming the world, and of obtaining the inheritance of the saints in light. It has great prevalence in averting divine judgments from a people, and in obtaining for them the richest blessings. It is the surest defence of individuals, families, and whole nations.

Family religion, including prayer, pious instruction, and government, is no less important. On these two very much depend the religion, comfort, and salvation of individuals, the religion, good order, honor, and prosperity of families, of the church, and commonwealth. In these the divine honor, and the present and endless happiness of men are most deeply concerned. Scarcely any thing, among a people whose fathers were men of prayer, and who, like Abraham, have commanded that their children and households after them should keep the way of the Lord, Gen. 18 : 19, can be a greater apostasy, than a casting off fear, and restraining prayer before God, and the neglect of family

religion. It is at once sinking down from a state of Christianity, under the light of the glorious Gospel, into a state of heathenism. It is at the same time awfully calculated to bring down the wrath of God on all such children of impiety and disobedience. If men will forsake God, *he will cast them off for ever.* 1 Chron. 28 : 9.

Prayer is certainly an act of *natural worship.* If there be a God of infinite perfection, nothing is more certain than that he ought to be worshipped as such; and prayer is a principal part of that homage which we owe him, as our Creator, constant Preserver, and Benefactor. His perfections challenge our supreme love and most perfect obedience; his daily care over us and countless mercies towards us, claim our continual thanksgivings; our daily sins demand our constant penitential supplications for his pardoning goodness; and our continual wants, that we should always be asking his help. Prayer, therefore, is but our reasonable service. It is founded in the very nature of things, in the infinite perfections of God, in our relations to him and dependence on him. The very heathen cried every man to his god. They sacrificed, and made vows. Jonah 1 : 5, 16.

Further, the express *commands of God* oblige men, in all places and circumstances, to pray to him; to pray with all kinds of prayer and supplication; to pray without ceasing, and without fainting. It is written, "Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your hearts before him." Psalm 62 : 8. "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." 1 Tim. 2 : 8. Jesus Christ abundantly inculcated the duty of prayer. "He spake a parable to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint." Luke 18 : 1. He commanded, that men should watch and pray always. He expressly enjoined this as absolutely necessary to guard them from temptation, to give them victory over the world, and that they might stand before him with victory and triumph at the last day. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into

temptation." Matt. 26 : 41. "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21 : 36, compared with chapter 22 : 40, 46. The apostles were no less express and abundant in inculcating this great duty. This was their language to the churches : "Pray without ceasing." 1 Thess. 5 : 17. "Watch unto prayer." 1 Peter, 4 : 7. "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." Eph. 6 : 18. These passages expressly command men to pray always ; never to cease praying at the proper times and occasions of prayer ; that men watch for those times and occasions ; that they should not fail of attending and improving them to their edification and comfort ; and that they should watch their hearts, that they may always be in a suitable frame for prayer ; that they should pray with all kinds of prayer used among Christians, and persevere in them to the end. The apostle Paul enjoins this praying always with all prayer, as of the highest necessity for Christians, that they may succeed in their spiritual warfare ; even after they have taken the whole armor of God, and done all things else to stand. Without this they never can stand and win the field. Thus abundantly is prayer enjoined, and the necessity of it shown, and the duty pressed upon all men universally, by our blessed Saviour and his apostles.

Secret prayer is expressly commanded by Christ, who was a remarkable example of prayer. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret ; and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." Matt. 6 : 6. He not only commanded this, and encouraged it by a most gracious promise of an open reward, but recommended it by his example. He retired into mountains and solitary places, and it seems, sometimes spent whole

nights in prayer. "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." Luke 6 : 12. How doth this command and example of Christ, teach and oblige all men to be constant and abundant in secret prayer, and in the secret duties of religion.

Further, as all kinds of prayer are expressly commanded, "praying always with all prayer and supplication," FAMILY PRAYER is included. This certainly is one kind of prayer. All heads of families are therefore indispensably obliged, by the divine authority and express precept, to pray with their respective households. Besides, as reason teacheth us to pray in general, and as we are expressly commanded to pray to God in secret, because he is worthy to be worshipped, because we are his creatures and owe him all the homage of our hearts and lives, because we are entirely dependent on him and have innumerable wants which he only can supply, because he loads us with his benefits, and because we are sinners and must perish without his pardoning mercy, so families for the same reasons are certainly bound to pray. There are all the reasons for family prayer which there are for secret prayer. Nay, there are more, and some of greater consideration. Families owe no less homage to God than individuals. They are no less dependent. They all have family wants and blessings, have family sins, and must be miserable without the divine favor. The religion of a whole family, its order and prosperity, are more important than those of an individual. More good, other things being equal, is done; more are instructed and edified. God is more visibly honored.

If secret prayer, therefore, be an indispensable duty, family prayer must be much more so. Indeed, we are taught this by the most important and forcible Scripture examples. What less could be included in the resolution of Joshua, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord," Josh. 24 : 15, than family prayer, and all pious and

useful family instruction? What can be designed by David's returning to bless his house, but to pray with his family? 2 Sam. 6 : 20. What was the praying of Daniel three times a day in his house, but family prayer? Dan. 6 : 10. Had it been secret prayer, his enemies could not have known it, they could not have proved it, or expected to have obtained any advantage against him on that account. What were the prayers of Cornelius in his house, but prayers with his family? Acts 10 : 2, 30.

Our divine Master has added his example to that of pious men. He prayed alone with his disciples, who were his constant family. "And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him." Luke 9 : 18. How remarkably did he pray with them, and for them, just before his passion. John 17. He not only prayed with them, but taught them to pray with one another, or among themselves, as a family. The prayer which he taught was a social prayer. This was the form of it: "*Our* Father, which art in heaven, give *us* this day our daily bread: lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." This could not be secret prayer, because the terms are plural. It was given as a form particularly for his disciples, for the then present time, while they continued together as one family; for after his resurrection and the introduction of Christianity, he taught them to pray and ask every thing in his name. Do not the examples of these ancient saints, and much more the instructions and example of Christ, clearly teach us the will of God with respect to this duty, and lay indispensable obligations on all Christians to practise family prayer?

But further, do not all the commands which oblige *parents to educate their children for God*, bind them constantly to pray with and for their families? Can any family be a religious family, educated for God, without prayer? Certainly it cannot. But God has given the most strict and abundant commands, that his people shall instruct their children in the doctrines and duties of religion, and educate

them for him. "And the words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Deut. 6 : 6, 7. "For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children. That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children; that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments; and might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God." Psalm 78 : 5–8. "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Prov. 22 : 6. "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Eph. 6 : 4. Nothing can be more expressly and strongly enjoined, than the good instruction and government of children in these Scripture passages. Nothing can more fully show how much the divine mind is engaged in them, or how necessary and important they are in the divine view. The passages imply that a pious education of children is the most probable and certain way to engage them to walk in the path of life, and never to turn from it. God has commanded parents most diligently and laboriously to instruct their children by precept, example, and all means in their power, and to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, that they may set their hope in God, and not forget his works, but keep his commandments. The Scriptures import that if this be not done, children will be a stubborn and rebellious generation, who will not set their hearts aright, and whose spirit will not be steadfast with God.

Universal observation and experience teach the happy

effects of a pious education. Nothing, perhaps, in the power of man, can lay such a foundation for the welfare of individuals, of families, and all communities, civil or religious, as this. The principles which men imbibe in youth, the impressions made, and the habits which are then formed, commonly grow up with them, continue through life, and as that advances grow more fixed and operative. The Jews, therefore, compared that which a child learned to writing upon clean and elegant paper, which might always be seen and read. Jerome compared the impressions made on young minds, and habits formed in early life, to locks of wool dyed in scarlet, which never could be reduced to their original whiteness. Children trained in the knowledge and fear of God, have been the seed, support, and ornament of the church, from age to age. Hence, this observation of Calvin, "that if we would have the church flourish, we must begin in the good instruction of children."

It is of the highest imaginable importance to them, with respect to their usefulness to themselves and others, and to their present and future happiness. It is a powerful restraint from those errors and vices, by which persons often bring shame, misery, and ruin upon themselves. It makes them orderly, peaceable, submissive, and dutiful, and through the blessing of God, is a special means of their salvation. It is very essential to the peace, honor, and beauty of a family. It makes children the crown and joy of their parents, the support and solace of their declining years. Pious parents have no greater joy than this, to see their children walking in the truth; to have communion with them in the private and public duties and ordinances of religion; to have the pleasing hope that they are born of God, that he has given them a spirit of adoption, and that they are striving together with them in their prayers to God for themselves, for them, and the church universal; and to have the prospect that they shall enjoy them for ever in the great and blessed family of heaven. What sweet fruits are these of the good

education of children. It makes them good members of society, the ornaments and pillars of the church and of the state.

Further, this is of infinite moment not only to the present age, but to generations yet unborn. If ye train up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, they will probably train up their children in the same manner, and so piety may, through the blessing of God, whose mercy is upon them who fear him unto a thousand generations, be continued from age to age. The manner in which you shall educate your children, their piety or wickedness, will, in their consequences, give a general tone and character to future generations, and be the means of transmitting holiness and happiness, or pollution and misery, to unborn ages.

In this view, how great is the guilt incurred in neglecting family religion and good government. It is sinning against the express commands of God, against all his goodness and mercy in giving you families and preserving them. It is sinning against yourselves, against the children which God has graciously given you, against the church and commonwealth, and against the ages which are yet to be born. This is a kind of unpardonable sin. "For I have told him, that I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever." 1 Sam. 3 : 13, 14. This, in a peculiar manner, is that iniquity of the fathers, which an offended God visits upon their children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him. Exod. 20 : 5. When their fathers are impious, neglect their education, and set them evil examples, they cause them to become, "as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation." Their fathers' sins become the very sins of their children, and so it proceeds from one generation to another; and because of their sins, God withholds his Spirit and grace

from them, and his wrath comes on such children of impiety and disobedience, for many successive ages. How ought ye all, therefore, to fear and tremble at this sin!

But how can you avoid this guilt, and escape the eternal execration of your own dear offspring, and of ages to come? How will you instruct and educate them for God, while you neglect to pray with them and for them? Is not prayer a very essential part of family religion? Can there be any true religion or Christianity without it? Are not prayerless families rather heathen, than Christian families? Families of heathen under the light of the Gospel? Archbishop Tillotson, in his sermons on family religion, speaking of daily prayers to God, morning and evening, and of reading the Scriptures at the same time, says, "Where it is neglected, I do not see how any family can in reason be esteemed a family of Christians, or indeed to have any religion at all." Prayer is an important part of that worship and religion which God requires of you and of your children. It is an important part of that religion, which you are bound to teach them. It is one of the most solemn and impressive of all means of instruction. In this we acknowledge the being, greatness, infinite perfections, dominion, and consummate blessedness of God. We confess our sin and misery, and ask pardon in the name of Jesus Christ, as the Lord our righteousness. We acknowledge the mercies of God, our dependence on him, and recognize the principal doctrines and duties of our holy religion. How is it possible to teach so many, and such momentous things, in any other way, so solemnly, and to such advantage? Is there any thing which is calculated so deeply to impress the minds of your children and domestics with a sense of the reality of the divine existence, of an universal Providence, of their fallen, miserable condition, of their need of a Saviour, that Jesus is the Christ, and that there is salvation in no other? What else is so calculated to fix in their minds a sense of the reality and importance of religion? What can so convince them

of your concern for their souls and bodies, as your reading the Scriptures to them, and praying affectionately for them, and with them? What other method can so effectually teach them to pray, and engage them in the habit of prayer?

Further, family prayer gives dignity and importance to heads of families in their own houses, and an additional weight and influence to all their instructions, counsels, and reproofs. It gives weight to their authority, and is an important means of order and decency in families. Every head of a family is a king and priest in his own house. Precious souls are committed to his care, and he is by God's appointment to instruct and govern them for him, to offer their prayers and praises to him, and to be a continual intercessor for them. A most solemn charge is committed to him, the charge of souls, and he must account for them. He needs continual grace and influence to discharge his high trust, and that he may render his account with joy, saying, "Here am I, and the children thou hast graciously given me." Prayer is an appointed means of obtaining all needed grace and wisdom, and does much to qualify heads of families for the arduous duties to which God in his providence has appointed them. Their reading and praying with their families, as their religious head, awakens respect, and gives them a commanding influence over them. It greatly assists and strengthens them in the government of their families, in restraining them from sin, and in engaging them in the practice of piety and righteousness.

Continual family prayer, at the same time, will have a direct and powerful tendency to secure the blessing of God on all your instructions and labors, in bringing them up for him. This will also give a consistency to your conduct. But how can you expect his blessing on yourselves, your instructions, or your children, while you neglect to ask it? What consistency, or sincerity, will there appear to be in your religious instructions and counsels to them, while you cast off fear, restrain prayer, and neglect religion yourselves?

Will not your neglect teach them not to pray, weaken your authority and influence, and render all your religious instructions, counsels, and warnings, of little weight with them? Will you not more than unteach by your example, all you attempt to teach by precept? Of what immense importance, in these views, is family prayer and religion. Besides, do not all the commands of God, which enjoin love to him and mankind, a regard to his honor, to the prosperity of Zion, or the good of men, bind you indispensably to this duty? Most certainly they do, since your own comfort and salvation, the peace, order, and happiness of your families, the usefulness, honor, and salvation of your children, the glory of God and the advancement of his kingdom, are deeply concerned in it.

It may further be observed, that family prayer may be urged upon the same principles that any social or public worship can be. If the perfections of God, his creating goodness and countless mercies; if our dependence on him, our guilty, helpless condition, and need of his help; if the honor of God, our own edification and comfort, or the instruction and edification of others, render public worship a duty, they all equally bind men to the worship of God in their families. If the examples of the saints, and of our blessed Lord, teach the one, they also teach the other.

Indeed, the common sense and feelings of mankind teach, that when a family or community have offended a prince or benefactor, they should jointly, by the head of the family, or some other person in their name, confess their faults and seek reconciliation. When "Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon, they came with one accord to him, and having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace, because their country was nourished by the king's country." Acts 12 : 20. When families, or particular communities, have received rich and repeated favors from a prince, or some noble benefactor, their natural feelings and good sense teach them to acknow-

ledge such favors. How much more do they teach families to confess their faults, and seek reconciliation to God, and to bless him for his countless mercies. Is he the only Being to whom guilty, dependent families are not obliged to confess their faults; with whom they are under no obligations to be reconciled; and to whom they are not bound to give thanks for all his benefits? An appeal is made to your reason and conscience. Let them seriously determine the point.

Praying always with all prayer, comprises PUBLIC PRAYER *in the house of God, and in the assemblies of his people,* wherever they may be convened. It implies your being instant in season and out of season, to offer your prayers and praises to God, and to supplicate his mercies, as well as to hear his word; and that you by no means neglect the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is. Heb. 10 : 25. God has commanded his ministers to "preach the word," to "be instant in season and out of season," 2 Tim. 4 : 2; and this implies the duty of the people constantly to attend to offer their public prayers and praises to God, and hear the word dispensed. Whenever it is the duty of ministers to pray and preach in public, it is the duty of the people to hear. Public social worship has been sanctioned by divine institution, and by the example of the saints from the commencement of the Jewish and Christian churches unto the present time. Good men have always been remarkable for their love to the house of God, and attendance on public worship. This was the language of David and the pious Jews: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." Psalm 27 : 4. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; for a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praising

thee." Psalm 84 : 1, 2, 4, 10. This was their resolution: "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." Psalm 122 : 2. The prophets Isaiah, Micah, and Zechariah represent that, in the days of the Messiah, when the Spirit shall be poured upon mankind, there will be an uncommon zeal for public worship. All nations shall flow together to the house of God. Isaiah 2 : 2, 3, and Micah 4 : 1, 2. "The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts: I will go also." Zech. 8 : 20–22. This is the very spirit of God's children towards his house and worship. How abundant were the primitive Christians in their public prayers and praises. They "were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." Luke 24 : 53. "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and in prayers; and were continually in the temple, praising God." Acts 2 : 42, 46. This was remarkably the spirit of Christ. Where was he found at twelve years old, but in the temple, attending its public instructions? It is written of him, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." Psalm 69 : 9. No person who does not love public worship has his spirit, or can be his disciple. No man who does not delight in public worship, and the communion of the saints in this world, can ever be qualified for the worship of God's temple above, or be admitted to the society and blessedness of the church of the first-born, which are written in heaven.

Public worship is one of the most important means of instruction, edification, communion with God, and all divine consolation: in the house of God it is that his people see his power and glory, and are satisfied as with marrow and fatness. This is the birthplace of the saints. When God writeth up the people, it shall be said of Zion, that this and that man was born in her. Faith comes by hearing. By the foolishness of preaching it pleased God to save them that believe. Public worship is the brightest emblem of heaven, and most wisely adapted to prepare those who will

devoutly attend upon it for that blest abode. The blessing of the Lord is upon those who attend it, and his curse is denounced upon all those who neglect it, in the days of the Messiah. "Blessed are they that dwell in thine house; they will be still praising thee." Psalm 84 : 4. "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, and waiting at the posts of my doors." Prov. 8 : 34. On the other hand, those who will not publicly worship God, are threatened with drought, famine, and death. "And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain, there shall be the plague, wherewith the Lord shall smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles." Zech. 14 : 17, 18. With what constancy, zeal, and devotion, should all go to pray before the Lord. How should every one resolve, "*I will go also.*"

Praying always with all prayer and supplication, as the divine precept enjoins, comprises EJACULATORY prayer; or an offering up of short mental petitions and praises to God, as occasions may require, when journeying or laboring, when sitting or walking. They may be offered at all times, and in all places. This is a constant recollection, that we are in the presence of God; and it greatly contributes to keep us always in his fear. Many are the examples of it in the Scriptures, especially in the Psalms. I am persuaded that all persons who have attained to any considerable degree of piety, have been much exercised in this kind of prayer. They will rarely close their eyes in the evening, or open them in the morning, without it. Immediate dangers, temptations, unexpected mercies, or deliverances, will engage the soul in short prayers and praises. Prayer is the very breath of the Christian's heart, by which he maintains a constant course of communion with God. His eyes, like David's, "are ever towards the Lord." Psalm 25 : 15.

Praying always with all prayer and supplication, also includes the acknowledgment of God at your *tables*. Our divine Master has taught us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread;" and by his example, to ask his blessing in the participation of it. It is also expressly commanded, that we should "give thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Eph. 5 : 20.

This is that life of prayer which all true Christians live. They not only pray with all prayer and supplication, with all perseverance therein, but they pray in the spirit, worshipping the Father, in spirit and in truth. They are all the seed of Jacob, and know how to wrestle with God in prayer. They have all the spirit of Christ, and delight in drawing near to God. "Because they are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Gal. 4 : 6. This is that life of prayer which the Scriptures enjoin, which the examples of the saints and the perfect example of our Saviour recommend. It is that life which every good man desires and determines, by the grace of God, to live, and which is most earnestly recommended to all persons to whom this address shall come.

To engage you in such a pious and happy life, you are most seriously entreated to contemplate, not only the commands, but the example of Christ, and the resolutions and examples of the saints. "As for me," saith the Psalmist, "I will call upon God: evening and morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud." Psalm 55 : 17. "Seven times a day will I praise thee." Psalm 119 : 164. "I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall be continually in my mouth." Psalm 34 : 1. How did Moses, Job, Samuel, Elijah, Daniel, the apostles, and primitive Christians pray. How did Jesus Christ pray, night and day, while he tabernacled in flesh, "offering up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save him from death." Are you not under indispensable obli-

gations to follow these examples? Know ye not, "that if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his?" If ye will not be followers of those who inherit the promises, ye certainly can never inherit with them.

But further, be persuaded to pray from a consideration of *the* ADVANTAGES of prayer. These are not only great and numerous, but they are lasting as eternity. Prayer is a direct address to God, as omniscient and omnipresent, as directing and governing all creatures and things in heaven and in earth. It is an offering up of our desires to him, in the name of Christ, for things agreeable to his will. It is an explicit acknowledgment of his being and perfections, and that he is the God of all grace and consolation. It is a fixed and solemn meditation on him, his goodness and glory, as in his very presence. In this view, it is one of the most important of all means to impress the mind with a deep sense of the certainty of his existence, of the glory of his majesty, that he is always with us, that his eye is always upon us, and to keep him always in our minds, and before our eyes. By praying without ceasing, morning and evening, in secret and in private, by addressing him in short petitions and thanksgivings at noon, and by presenting the desires and feelings of our hearts before him in mental ejaculations, an habitual sense of God, of our dependence on him, and obligations to him, are fixed in our minds, and we are led to the most adoring ideas of his infinite majesty. While, in this solemn manner, we meditate on him and his infinite perfections, it is most happily adapted to humble us before him, to beget confidence in his wisdom, power, and goodness, a holy reverence of him, and a sense of the blessedness of having such a God for our eternal Father and portion. At the same time, it is calculated to impress the heart with an awful sense of the danger and dreadful consequences of his displeasure. In this way the saints acquaint themselves with God, advance in peace, comfort, and sanctification. "Beholding as in a glass the glory of God,

they are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor. 3 : 18.

Further, prayer has a happy tendency to familiarize to our minds the principal doctrines of religion, and to *establish us in the truth.* While we confess our apostasy and exceeding sinfulness; while we pray for pardon, adoption, sanctification, and eternal life through the atoning death and perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, and ask all blessings and offer all our praises in his name, the whole tendency of it is to fix deeply and habitually in our hearts, the belief of the great doctrines of original sin, of our inexcusable wickedness, of the necessity of regeneration, of justification, adoption, and sanctification, wholly through a Redeemer. It confirms us more and more in this, that Jesus is the Christ, that he is mighty to save, and that there is salvation in no other. While we supplicate divine help to perform the duties of piety, righteousness, charity, forgiveness, patience, and sobriety, it is calculated to keep alive a sense of these duties in our hearts, and to establish us in the practice of them. Our supplications not to be led into temptation, but to be delivered from evil, have a powerful tendency to make us afraid and cautious with respect to sin, and to make us flee the very appearance of evil. Our acknowledgments of the divine mercies are adapted to keep them in continual remembrance, and to make us always thankful.

Prayer is also an ordinance in which God's people *obtain release from guilt, distress, and sorrow, and experience great comfort and joy.* The Psalmist bears witness that it is "good to draw near to God." Psalm 73 : 28. What comfort and deliverance did Jacob obtain by prayer, when he had power with God and prevailed, and the Lord delivered him from his brother Esau. What sweet release from guilt did David experience in prayer. "His bones waxed old by reason of his roaring all the day;" but when he "acknowledged his transgression, God forgave the iniquity of his sin. For

this," says he, "shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found." Psalm 32 : 6–6. How was Hannah comforted and blessed in prayer. She had been a woman of a sorrowful spirit; but in prayer she was comforted, and her countenance was no more sad. 1 Sam. 1 : 15, 18. What blessings did Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Daniel, the apostles, and primitive Christians obtain by prayer. How was Israel saved by prayer, when the Lord was about to come up into the midst of them, and consume them in a moment. What deliverances and victories did they obtain for the church of God. When Moses held up his hands, how was Amalek discomfited. When Samuel cried unto the Lord, how did he thunder upon the enemies of Israel, and save his people. How did they obtain victories, stay, and open the bottles of heaven, stop the mouths of lions, shake the foundations of prisons, and open the gates of iron. What blessings have been obtained for individuals, for families, and the church of God, by prayer. Is it not through prayer that Zion prospers and enjoys peace? Is it not through this, that she is established? That her righteousness shall go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth? That Jerusalem shall be made a praise in the earth? The effectual fervent prayer of every righteous man availeth much. Whenever God's people draw near to him, he will draw nigh to them, in a way of special grace, to deliver them in danger, to comfort them in sorrow, to increase their faith, and love, and hope, and joy, and all the fruits of their righteousness. "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he will hear their cry, and save them." Psalm 145 : 19. He gives all new covenant blessings, even eternal salvation in answer to prayer. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Rom. 10 : 13.

The more Christians pray with the spirit of adoption—the more they are habituated to it—the more sweet and sensible is their communion with the Father, and with his

Son Jesus Christ; the more they edify themselves and grow in grace; the more they edify their families, the church of God, and all with whom they have occasion to pray; and the more they avert the divine judgments, and turn away wrath from a people. The more they call down blessings upon themselves, and families, and the Israel of God, the greater also will be their reward in the day of the appearing and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ; for every prayer offered in his name will receive a divine, an everlasting reward. Even the prayers which have been made in their most secret retirement, shall be rewarded openly. How vast and numerous, in these views, are the advantages of prayer. They are not merely temporal, but spiritual and eternal. What motives does this sketch of the advantages of prayer exhibit, to engage all to arise without delay, and call upon the name of the Lord. To pray always, and not to faint.

The encouragements which God hath given you to pray, are indeed many and great beyond calculation. All the advantages of prayer are so many encouragements to pray. The goodness of God is a vast encouragement to pray to him always. The greater the goodness of a prince or benefactor is, the more easy of access, the greater is the encouragement to ask his favor. But God is infinitely and unchangeably good, and most easy of access. He is always nigh unto them who call upon him in truth. The poorest, the vilest, the most helpless and forlorn may approach unto him, through Christ Jesus, and be accepted in him. They may pray to him at all times, in all places, and upon all emergencies. They may make known unto him all their wants, and he will supply them. He is rich unto all who call upon him. What encouragements are these to pray!

God's erecting a throne of grace, and opening a way to the mercy-seat, at the expense of the precious blood of his own Son, is a further encouragement. He who hath done so much that sinners might have access to him, must be

most ready and willing to hear their prayers, and to communicate all blessings to them through a Redeemer. "He who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Rom. 8 : 32. That if any man sin, we have such an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous, is a great encouragement to pray. But as though all these encouragements were not sufficient to show his willingness to hear, he has represented himself as the God "who heareth prayer;" as though it were his very name and nature to hear prayer. "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come." Psalm 65 : 2. With this representation his promises perfectly correspond. This is the general tenor of them: "And shall it come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." Isaiah 65 : 24. "Ask, and it shall be given you: for every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." Matt. 7 : 7, 8. Not one humble, praying soul ever once prayed in vain. No, not one, however guilty and despised in this world, ever went, in the name of Jesus, to the throne of grace, and departed unheard and unblest. It is written, "I said not to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain." Isaiah 45 : 19. "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it for you." John 14 : 13, and 15 : 16. God is more ready to give his Holy Spirit, heaven with all its glory, to those who ask him, than the kindest parents are to give bread to their dearest offspring. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit unto them that ask him?" Luke 11 : 13. "He giveth liberally, and upbraideth not." James 1 : 5. He does for his people "exceeding abundantly above all that they ask or think." Eph. 3 : 20. What encouragements are these to pray: to pray always, and not to faint!

No. 92.

THE FORGIVING AFRICAN.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

JOURNEYING on business through the western part of the state of New York, in the summer of 1816, I stopped at an inn on Saturday evening, in a thinly settled part of the country, and put up for the Sabbath. Upon inquiry, I was informed that there was no place of public worship within a number of miles. The thought of spending the Lord's day in such a situation spread a gloom over my mind. But how often is God better to us than our fears! Being weary with my journey, and having committed myself to the Keeper of Israel, I retired to rest, under an affecting sense of the goodness of God. The morning dawned upon me in a composed frame of spirit; and every thing seemed to conspire to produce in me wonder, adoration, and love. As I cast my eyes over the rich scenery of nature's works, I could not but exclaim, raising my thoughts to the Maker of them all, These "thus wondrous fair, Thyself how wondrous then!" The day did not pass without some lively tokens of the divine presence. The pages of the written word were open before me, and I was enabled to see the beauty of its doctrines, and to taste the sweetness of its promises.

Towards the close of the day, being disturbed by the noisy and profane conversation of some persons who had called at the inn, I "went out into the field to meditate at eventide." I directed my steps towards the wood, in a path which led through beautiful fields richly laden with the bounties of Providence. I had but just penetrated the border of the forest, when the sound of a voice fell upon my ear. I paused; the tone seemed to be that of supplication. Approaching the place whence it proceeded, I perceived, beside a large oak, a negro woman, apparently advanced in life, upon her knees, with her hands clasped together, and

her eyes steadfastly fixed upon heaven. I listened, and was struck with astonishment, to hear one of the sable daughters of Ethiopia, in the most importunate manner, raising her prayer to God. Never before did I witness such simplicity, such fervor, such engagedness. Like a true daughter of Jacob, she seemed to have power with the Angel of God. That part of her prayer which I distinctly heard, was confined to herself and her master.

"O Lord, bless my master. When he calls upon thee to damn his soul, do not hear him, do not hear him, but hear me—save him—make him know he is wicked, and he will pray to thee. I am afraid, O Lord, I have wished him bad wishes in my heart—keep me from wishing him bad—though he whips me and beats me sore, tell me of my sins, and make me pray more to thee—make me more glad for what thou hast done for me, a poor negro."

As she arose from her kneeling posture, her eye glanced upon me. Ingenuous confusion overspread her countenance on being thus discovered. She was preparing hastily to retreat, when I called to her in a mild tone, bade her not to be alarmed, and told her I was pleased to find her so well employed. Encouraged by the mildness of my address, she came towards me. I inquired into her situation and circumstances, and she seemed very happy of the opportunity of making them known. I asked her why she came to this place to pray. She answered that her master was a very wicked man, and would not, if he knew it, allow her to pray at all. The reason of her coming there at this time to pray, was, that her master had been beating her that day, and she was afraid she had not felt right towards him; and that she had done wrong, also, by not submitting with more resignation to her unhappy lot. I asked her how she came to think it was her duty to pray. She said she had once heard a woman pray in a barn—that the woman prayed for the whole world—said they were all sinners, and going the road to hell—and that after she heard this woman's prayer,

she thought it was her duty to pray too. But for a long time she felt that she was so bad that she could not pray. After a while she found that she could pray, and that she loved to pray. It seemed to do her good, she said, after her master had been beating her, to go away into the fields or woods and pray to the Lord.

I inquired of her whether there were no religious people in the place. She mentioned as the only one, the woman before spoken of, whom she had heard pray a number of times; but she had never conversed with her. I then told her that there were many people in the world who had similar sentiments to hers respecting God and prayer. Her eyes sparkled on hearing this intelligence; she listened with eagerness while I entered into some particulars respecting the new birth and the way of salvation through a crucified Redeemer. The truths of the Gospel were to her as cold water to a thirsty soul. Her countenance, now glowing with wonder, now suffused with tears, now lighted up with joy, is still present to my imagination. She appeared very anxious to be instructed herself; but this was not all: she entreated me to go and converse and pray with her master; and to pray for him when alone. When I was about leaving her, never expecting to see her again in this world, I exhorted her to continue in the exercise of a submissive and forgiving spirit towards her master, and to commit herself into the hands of Him who judgeth righteously; encouraging her with the prospect of a speedy release from all her sufferings, and that, in due season, if she persevered in well-doing, she would, through grace, reap a rich reward in the kingdom of glory.

Never was I so fully convinced that the religion of Christ consists very much in *the spirit of love and forgiveness*. The native pride of the human heart is quick-sighted in discerning ill-treatment, violent and unrelenting in its resentments. Too many, alas, even of those who bear the Christian name, and profess an assured hope of pardon from

their final Judge, know not how to forget or forgive an offence of a fellow-worm. Such a professor may appear to be planted in the vineyard of the Lord; but his fruits are the grapes of Sodom and the clusters of Gomorrah.

This poor woman, often cruelly treated by the hands of an unkind and unfeeling master, showed nothing like anger or revenge. While smarting under the wounds inflicted by his cruelty, she would retire beyond the sight and hearing of mortals, to pray for his welfare. When speaking of the conduct of her master, she did not dwell upon his faults with seeming pleasure and delight. The ingenuousness of her love and compassion manifested itself in a very different manner. Her love to God showed itself in secret, persevering, and importunate prayer for her master; in earnestly requesting me to go and converse and pray with him; and in entreating me, with a countenance visibly marked with sincerity and love, to pray for him when I was alone. Nothing did she appear to desire more than her master's eternal welfare. Such a spirit as this must be religion; it is the very spirit of Christ; and if so, nothing short of such a temper can be religion. It is an easy thing to talk and pray—words are light and airy things; but to love our enemy, to do all in our power to promote his present and future well-being—this requires grace indeed.

Reader, have you from the heart forgiven all who have injured you? If not, can you hope God will forgive you? Think of your offences against him, in thought, in word, and conduct. Think of the love of Christ in dying for his enemies, that all who believe in him may be saved. Go to him, confessing your sins and trusting in his mercy. Henceforward let love to God and love to man reign in your heart, that, when weighed in the balance of eternal truth, you may not be found wanting the meek and holy temper of this poor slave.

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No. 93.

THE

GREAT QUESTION ANSWERED.

Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas; and brought them out, and said, Sirs, WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED? And they said, BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, and thou shalt be saved. ACTS 16: 29–31.

THAT great numbers of people, even in this Christianized country, are ignorant of the way of salvation, is too evident to be denied. It is manifestly no part of their concern, any more than if they were in no danger of being lost, or such a thing as salvation had never been heard of. Nor is this true only of weak and illiterate people; men who in all other concerns are wise, in these things have no knowledge or sense to direct them. The evil, therefore, cannot be ascribed to simple ignorance, which, as far as it goes, tends to excuse; but to being *willingly* ignorant, saying unto God, "Depart from us—we desire not the knowledge of thy ways."

God, however, has a witness in every man's conscience. Every man, whatever he may pretend, feels himself to be a sinner, and to need forgiveness. Ignorant and idolatrous as the Philippian jailer had been all his life, yet, when death stared him in the face, he trembled and cried for mercy. And if it was thus with the heathen, much more is it likely to be thus with those who have been educated under the light of revelation. The most careless and thoughtless cannot stand the approach of death. The courage of the most hardened infidel commonly fails him at that solemn period.

Reader, are you one of the many who scarcely ever think of these things; and whose chief concern is, what you shall eat, what you shall drink, and wherewithal you shall be clothed? Let the anxiety of a heathen reprove you.

If you were made only to eat and drink, and enjoy life, for a few years, and then to sink into nothing, you might well throw aside every care, except that which respects your present gratification. But you are of an order of beings distinguished from all others in the creation. In your nature are united mortality and immortality; the dust of the ground, and the breath of the Almighty. Life to you is but the introduction to existence, a short voyage which will land you on the shores of eternity. You are surrounded by a number of objects, and feel an interest in each. You build houses, plant orchards, rear animals, and form to yourself *a home;* but you are not at home. Your feelings associate with these things, but they are not fit associates for you. You may have a portion in all that is doing in your family, and in your country, yea, and in some sort, all that is done under the sun; but this is not sufficient

for you. The time draweth nigh, when there will be an end to all these things, and they will be as though they had not been; but you will still live. You will witness the wreck of nature itself, and survive it; and stand before the Son of man at his appearing and kingdom. Can you think of these things, and be unconcerned?

Or, though you be an immortal and accountable creature—as your conscience tells you you are, whenever you consult it, and sometimes when you would gladly shut your ears against it—yet, *if you had not sinned against your Maker*, there would be no cause for alarm. A sinless creature has nothing to fear from a righteous God. The approach of an assize, with all its solemn pomp, does not terrify the innocent; neither would judgment or eternity inspire the least degree of dread, if you were guiltless. But you are a *sinner*, a corrupt branch of a corrupt stock. God placed, as I may say, a generous confidence in our species, and required nothing in return but love; but we have returned him evil for good. You, for yourself, are conscious that you have done so, and that it is in your very nature to do evil.

Or, though you be what is called a sinner, yet, *if sin were your misfortune, rather than your fault*, you might fly for refuge to the equity of your Maker. But this is not the case. Whatever may be said as to the manner in which you became a sinner, and however you may wish to excuse yourself on that ground, your own conscience bears witness, that what you are you choose to be, and occasionally reproaches you for being so. You may speculate upon sin as a kind of hereditary disease, which is merely a misfortune, not a fault; but if so, why do you feel guilt on account of it? Why do you not also acquit others of blame, where the

evil is directed against you? You do not think of excusing a fellow-creature, when he injures you, upon any such grounds as you allege in excuse of transgression against God. If he be *rational, and his offence voluntary,* you make no further inquiry; but, without any hesitation, pronounce him criminal.

Out of your own mouth, therefore, shall you be judged. The inability that you feel to do good, is entirely owing to your having no heart to it. It is of the same nature as that of an unprincipled servant, who cannot seek his master's interest, but is always defrauding him. You would not hold such a servant blameless. Nor will God hold you so. You are not destitute of those powers which render us accountable beings, but merely of a heart to make use of them for God. You take pleasure in knowledge, but desire not the knowledge of *his* ways; in conversation, but the mention of serious religion strikes you dumb; in activity, but in his service you are as one that is dead. You are fond of news; but that which angels announced, and the Son of God came down to publish, gives you no pleasure. All these things prove, beyond a doubt, where the inability lies.

Or, if sin should be allowed to be your fault, yet, if it were a *small offence*, an imperfection that might be overlooked, or so slight a matter that you could atone for it by repentance, or prayers, or tears, or any effort of your own, there might be less reason for alarm. But neither is this the case. If sin were so light a matter as it is commonly made, how is it that a train of the most awful curses should be denounced against the sinner? Is it possible, that a just and good God would curse his creatures in basket and in store, in their houses and in their fields, in their lying

down, and in their rising up, and in all that they set their hands to, for a mere trifle, or an imperfection that might be overlooked?

If sin were a light thing, how is it that the Father of mercies should have doomed all mankind to death, and to all the miseries that prepare its way, on account of it? How is it that wicked men die under such fearful apprehensions? Above all, how is it that it should require the eternal Son of God to become incarnate, and to be made a sacrifice, to atone for it?

But if sin be thus offensive to God, then are you in a fearful situation. If you had the whole world to offer for your ransom, it would be of no account. Were that which you offered ever so pure, it could have no influence whatever towards atoning for your past guilt, any more than the tears of a murderer can atone for blood: but this is not the case—those very performances by which you hope to appease the divine anger, are polluted with sin.

You are, whether you know it or not, *a lost sinner*, and that in the strongest sense of the term. Men judge of sin only by its open acts, but God looketh directly at the heart. Their censures fall only on particular branches of immorality, which strike immediately at the well-being of society; but God views the root of the mischief, and takes into consideration all its mischievous bearings. "Know thou, therefore, and consider, that it is an evil thing and bitter that thou hast done; that thou hast departed from the living God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord of hosts."

Finally: Though your sin be exceedingly offensive to your Creator, and though you can make no atonement for it, yet, if you could *resist his power*, *escape his hand*, *or endure his wrath*, your unconcern might admit of some kind

of apology. Surely, I need not prove to you that you cannot resist his power—what is your strength, when tried? You may, in the hour of health and festivity, and when in company with others like yourself, indulge your pride, and boast great things; but if God touch you with his afflicting hand, your strength and your courage instantly forsake you.

And will you go on to provoke Omnipotence? Canst thou *escape* his hand? Whither wilt thou flee? If, attentive to thy safety, the rocks could fall on thee, or the mountains cover thee, yet would they not be able to hide thee from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. God hath beset thee behind and before, and laid his hand upon thee. Whither wilt thou go from his Spirit? Whither wilt thou flee from his presence? If thou ascend to heaven, he is there. Or if thou make thy bed in hell, behold, he is there!

The only question that remains is, whether thou canst *endure his displeasure*. And this must surely be a forlorn hope! Can thine heart endure, and thine hands be strong, in the day that he shall deal with thee? Think of the *wrath to come*. If it were founded in caprice or injustice, supported by conscious innocence, you might possibly bear it; but, should you perish, you will be destitute of this resource. Conscience will eternally say *Amen* to the justice of your sufferings. If you had mere justice done you, unmixed with mercy, your sufferings would be more tolerable than they will be; but if you perish, you must have your portion with Bethsaida and Chorazin. Goodness gives an edge to justice. The displeasure of a kind and merciful being—and such is the wrath of the Lamb—is insupportable.

If, after having heard these truths, and lived in a country where they are fully declared, you do not feel interested by them, you have reason to fear that God has given you up to hardness of heart, and that the language of the prophet is fulfilled in you: "Go unto this people, and say, Hearing, ye shall hear, and not understand; and seeing, ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed, lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Remember that, in Old-Testament times, when God blessed his people Israel with singular temporal blessings, he punished their transgressions mostly with temporal judgments; but now that we are favored with singular spiritual privileges, the neglect of them is commonly punished with spiritual judgments.

But whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear, I will declare unto you THE ONLY WAY OF SALVATION. That which was addressed to the Philippian jailer, is addressed to you. "God has so loved the world, as to give his only-begotten Son, that whosoever *believeth* in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." He hath given him not only to teach us the good and the right way, but to be made a sacrifice for sin, and as such to be himself the way. He suffered from the hands of wicked men; but this was not all; it pleased the Lord to bruise him. He hath put him to grief, and made his soul an offering for sin. He commanded his sword to awake against him, that through his death he might turn his hand in mercy towards perishing sinners. He hath set him forth to be a propitiation to declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

This is the only sacrifice which is well-pleasing to God. All that went before, were of no account but as they pointed to it; and all the prayers and praises of sinful creatures are no otherwise acceptable than as presented through it. It is not for you to go about to appease the divine displeasure, or to recommend yourself to the Saviour by any efforts of your own; but despairing of help from every other quarter, to receive the atonement which Christ hath made. To this you are *invited*, and that in the most pressing terms. He that made Him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, hath on this ground committed to his servants the ministry of reconciliation; and they, as ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by them, pray you in Christ's stead, "Be ye reconciled to God."

The blessings of pardon, peace, and eternal life, are compared to a feast, or marriage-supper, which the King of heaven and earth hath made for his Son; and he hath commanded his servants to go forth, as to the highways and hedges, and to invite without distinction; yea, to compel them to come in. Nor is this all: you are exhorted and commanded to believe in Christ, on pain of damnation. All your other sins expose you merely to the curse of the law; but the sin of unbelief, if persisted in, will expose you, like the barren fig-tree, to the curse of the Saviour, from which there is no redemption.

Say not in thine heart, "All these things I have believed from my youth up." You may indeed have been taught them, and have received them as a tradition from your fathers; but such faith is dead, and consequently inoperative. It is the same as that of the Jews towards Moses, which our Saviour would not admit to be faith. "If ye

believed Moses, ye would believe me, for he wrote of me." It is no better than the faith of devils, and in some respects has less influence; for they believe and tremble, whereas you believe and are at ease.

But it may be you will say, "I have examined Christianity for myself, and am fully persuaded it is true." Yet it has no effect upon you any more than if you disbelieved it, unless it be to restrain you within the limits of exterior decorum. Your faith, therefore, must still be *dead, being alone*. Believing in Christ is not the exercise of a mind at ease, casting up the evidences for and against, and then coldly assenting, as in a question of science, to that side which seems to have the greatest weight of proof. To one whose mind is subdued to the obedience of faith, there is indeed no want of evidence; but it is not so much from external proofs, as from its own intrinsic glory and suitableness to his case as a perishing sinner, that he feels himself impelled to receive it.

The Gospel is too interesting, and has too much influence on our past and future conduct, to be an object of unfeeling speculation. It is "a hope set before us," which none but those who are "ready to perish" will ever embrace. To believe it, is to renounce our own wisdom, our own righteousness, and our own will, and to fall into the arms of mere grace, through the atoning blood of the cross. If the good news of salvation be not in this manner believed, it signifies but little what speculative notions we may entertain concerning it; for where there is no renunciation of self, there is no dependence upon Christ for justification; and where there is no such dependence, there is no revealed interest in that important blessing; but the curses and threatenings of God stand in all their force against us.

PART II.

HAD the question proposed by the jailer been addressed to the first genius upon earth, unacquainted with the Gospel, it could not have been answered. Had it been put to all the great philosophers of antiquity, one by one, and to all the learned doctors among the Jews, none of them could have resolved it to any good purpose. Nor, amidst all the boasted light of modern times, can a single unbeliever be found who could know what to do with it. Yet it is a question which arises in every man's mind, at one period or other of his life; and a question which must be resolved, or we are lost for ever.

Reader, this important question may have already occupied your mind. An alarming sermon, a death in your family, a hint from a faithful friend, or, it may be, an impressive dream, has awakened your attention. You cannot take pleasure, as formerly, in worldly company and pursuits; yet you have no pleasure in religion. You have left off many vices, and have complied with many religious duties, but can find no rest for your soul. The remembrance of the past is bitter; the prospect of the future may be more so. The thought of God troubles you. You have even wished that you had never been born, or that you could now shrink back into non-existence, or that you were any thing rather than a man. But you are aware that all these wishes are vain. You do exist; your nature is stamped with immortality; you must go forward and die, and stand before this holy Lord God!

If these, or such like exercises, occupy your mind, the question of the Philippian jailer is yours; and to you let me address a few DIRECTIONS, included or implied in the answer.

If by this question you mean, What can you do to appease the wrath of God, or recommend yourself as a fit object of his mercy? What can you do as a good deed, or the beginning of a course of good deeds, in reward of which he may bestow upon you an interest in the Saviour? I answer, *Nothing*. An interest in Christ, and eternal life, are indeed given as a reward; but not of any thing we have done, or can do, even with divine assistance; it is the reward of the obedience of *Christ* unto death. To us it is of mere grace, and as such must be received. Though faith is in itself a holy exercise of the mind, yet, as that by which we are justified, it is directly opposed to doing. "To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt; but to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." He that worketh, seeks to obtain life and the favor of God, in some way or other, as a reward; but he that believeth, receives it as a free gift to the unworthy. And let me apprize you, that this is the state of mind you must be brought to, or you must perish for ever. So far as you think of doing any thing, call it what you may, with a hope of being pardoned and justified for its sake, so far you reject the only way of salvation, and have reason to expect your portion with unbelievers.

Let me deal freely with you. Yours is a most serious situation. The Gospel-rest is before you; and if you enter not in, it will be because of unbelief. You know the answer given to the jailer; and this is the only answer that can with safety be given to you. Consider, and beware, as you regard your eternal salvation, that you take up your rest in nothing short of it.

But, in the first place, let me declare unto you the Gos-

pel of God, which you are directed to believe. If this meet your case; if, rightly understood, it approve itself not only to your conscience, but your whole soul; if it accord with your desires, as it undoubtedly does with your necessities, all is well, and well forever. I shall not trouble you with the opinions of men as to what the Gospel is, nor even with my own, but direct you to the account given of it by its Author. The New Testament informs us what it is, in such plain and pointed language, that he who runs may read: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you *the Gospel* which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also *ye are saved*, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received, how that *Christ died for our sins* according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." "This is a faithful saying," —a truth of such importance as to have become a kind of Christian proverb—"and worthy of all acceptation, that *Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners*, of whom I am chief." "We PREACH *Christ crucified*." "I determined NOT TO KNOW ANY THING among you, save *Jesus Christ and him crucified*." "THIS IS THE RECORD, *that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*."

It is not meant, by these brief descriptions of the Gospel, that there is no other truth necessary to be believed, but that the doctrine of the cross, properly embraced, includes all others, or draws after it the belief of them.

The import of this Gospel is, that God is in the right,

and we are in the wrong; that we have transgressed against him without cause, and are justly exposed to everlasting punishment; that mercy, originating purely in himself, required, for the due honor of his government, to be exercised through the atonement of his beloved Son; that with this sacrifice God is well pleased, and can, consistently with all his perfections, pardon and accept of any sinner, whatever he hath done, who believeth in him.

What say you to this? The truth of it hath been confirmed by the most unquestionable proofs. It first began to be spoken by the Lord himself, and it has been confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness with signs, and wonders, and divers miracles. The witness of the three in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, is borne to this; namely, that "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son;" and to this also is directed the witness of the three on earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood. Can you subscribe to this great truth, in all its bearings, and rest the salvation of your soul upon it; or do you doubt whether you be so guilty, so helpless, and in so dangerous a state as this doctrine supposes? Is it as one of the chief of sinners that you view yourself; or does it grate upon your feelings to receive forgiveness in that humble character? In suing for mercy, are you content to stand on the same low ground as if you were a convict actually going to be executed; or does your heart secretly pine after a salvation less humiliating, in which some account might be made of that difference of character by which you may have been distinguished from the vilest of men, and in which you might be in some degree a coöperator with God? Does that which pleases God, please you; or does your mind revolt at it?

It meets all your wants, but none of your prejudices, proud thoughts, or vicious propensities; all these must come down, and be made a sacrifice to it. Can you subscribe to it on these terms?

I am well aware, that the great concern of persons in your situation, is to obtain *peace of mind;* and any thing which promises to afford this, attracts your attention. If this Gospel be believed with all your heart, it will give you peace. This is the good and the old way; walk in it, and you shall find rest for your soul: but it is not every thing which promises peace, that will ultimately afford it. It is at our peril to offer you other consolation, and at yours to receive it.

Consider, and beware, I say again, as you regard your eternal salvation, that you take up your rest in nothing short of Christ! Particularly,

1. *Beware of brooding over your guilt in a way of unbelieving despondence; and so of standing aloof from the hope of mercy.* Say not, "My sins have been too great, too numerous, or too aggravated, to be forgiven." "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from *all sin.*" Believest thou this? You are not straitened in him, but in your own bowels. God's thoughts are not as your thoughts, nor his ways as your ways: as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his thoughts higher than your thoughts, and his ways than your ways. On the sinner that returneth to our God he bestoweth *abundant* pardon. It is not, "If thou canst do any thing, help me;" but, "If thou canst believe—all things are possible to him that believeth." Of what dost thou doubt? Of his all-sufficiency? He is able to save to the *uttermost* all that come unto God by him. Of his willingness? Ought not his gracious invitations to satisfy thee on this head? Can you imagine that he would

proclaim, saying, "Whosoever thirsteth, let him come unto me and drink," and yet be reluctant to gratify the desires of those that come to him? Objections, on the ground of the greatness of guilt and unworthiness, may seem to wear the face of modesty and humility; but, after all, it becomes you to consider whether they be any other than the workings of a self-righteous spirit. If you could find in your heart to accept of mercy as one of the chief of sinners, all your objections would vanish in a moment.

One sees, in your very tears of despondency, a pining after acceptance with God by something in yourself. Were they put into words, they would amount to something like this: "If I had but somewhat to recommend me to the Saviour, I could go to him with assurance; or, if I had been less wicked, I might hope for acceptance." And what is this but making good the complaint of our Saviour? "Ye will not come unto me, that ye may have life!" Such longings after something to recommend you to the Saviour, are no other than "going about to establish your own righteousness;" and while this is the case, there is great danger of your being given up to imagine that you find the worthiness in yourself which your soul desireth.

2. *Beware of dwelling, in a way of self-complacency, on those reformations which may have been produced by the power of conviction.* This is another of those workings of unbelief, by which many have come short of believing, and so of entering into rest. There is no doubt but your convictions have driven you from the commission of grosser vices, and probably have frightened you into a compliance with various religious duties: but these are only the loppings off of the branches of sin; the root remains unmortified. It is not the breaking off of your sins that will turn to any ac-

count, unless they be broken off *by righteousness;* and this will not be the case but by believing in Christ. The power of corruption may have only retired into its strong holds, from whence, if you embrace not the Gospel-way of salvation, it will soon come forth with increased energy, and sweep away all your fancied reformations. Nay, it is very possible, that while the *lusts of the flesh* have seemed to recede, those of the *mind*, particularly spiritual pride, may have already increased in strength. If, indeed, you dwell on your reformations, and draw comfort from them, it is an undoubted proof that it is so; and then, instead of being reformed, or nearer the kingdom of heaven than you were before, your character is more offensive to God than ever. Publicans and harlots are more likely to enter into it than you.

Besides, if your reformations were ever so virtuous—which they are not, in his sight by whom actions are weighed—yet, while you are an unbeliever, they cannot be accepted. You yourself must first be accepted in the Beloved, ere any thing that you offer can be received. "It does not consist with the honor of the majesty of the King of heaven and earth, to accept of any thing from a condemned malefactor, condemned by the justice of his own holy law, till that condemnation be removed."

3. *Beware of deriving comfort from the distress of mind which you may have undergone, or from any feelings within you.* Some religious people will tell you, that these workings of mind are a sign that God has mercy in reserve for you; and that, if you go on in the way you are in, waiting as at the pool, all will be well in the end; but such language requires great qualification. It is not your being distressed in mind that will prove any thing in your favor, but the issue of it. Saul was distressed, as well as David;

and Judas, as well as Peter. When the murderers of our Lord were pricked in their hearts, Peter did not comfort them by representing this their unhappiness as a hopeful sign of conversion; but exhorted them to *repent, and be baptized every one of them in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.*

And thus it was with Paul and Silas, when the jailer was impressed with fear and dismay: they gave him no encouragement from thence, but preached Jesus Christ as the only source of hope. If one who had slain a man in Israel, had stopped short of the city of refuge, and endeavored to draw comfort from the alarm which he had felt, lest the avenger of blood should overtake him, would he have been safe? There is no security to you or to any man, but in fleeing immediately to the Gospel-refuge, and laying hold of the hope set before you. If you take comfort from your distress, you are in imminent danger of stopping short of Christ, and so of perishing for ever. Many, no doubt, have done so; and that which they have accounted waiting at the pool for the moving of the waters, has proved no other than settling upon a false foundation. Indeed, it must needs be so; for as there is no medium, in one that has heard the Gospel, between faith and unbelief, he that does not believe in Jesus for salvation, if he have any hope of it, must derive that hope from something in himself.

4. *Beware of considering faith itself the meritorious ground of acceptance with God.* It is true, that believing is an act of yours, and an act of obedience to God. Far be it from me that I should convey an idea of any thing short of a cordial reception of the Gospel being accompanied with salvation: a reception that involves a renunciation of self-

righteousness, and a submission to the righteousness of God. But if you consider it as a species of sincere obedience, which God has consented to accept, instead of a perfect one; and if you hope to be justified in *reward* of it, you are still "going about to establish your own righteousness" under an evangelical name. This is the commandment of God, that ye believe on the name of his Son. Faith is an act of obedience to God, yet it is not as such that it justifies us, but as receiving Christ, and bringing us into a living union with him, *for whose sake alone* we are accepted and saved.

Finally: *Beware of taking comfort from any impulse, or unfounded persuasion that your sins are forgiven, and that you are a favorite of God.* Many are deceived in this way, and mistake such a persuasion for faith itself. When a sinner is driven from all his former holds, it is not unusual for him, instead of falling at the feet of Christ as utterly lost, to catch at any new conceit, however unscriptural and absurd, if it will but afford him relief. If, in such a state of mind, he receives an impression, perhaps in the words of Scripture, that God has forgiven and accepted him, or dreams that he is in heaven, or reads a book, or hears a sermon favorable to such a method of obtaining relief, he eagerly imbibes it, and becomes intoxicated with the delicious draught. The joy of hope, being so new and unexpected a thing, and succeeding to great darkness and distress, produces a wonderful change in his mind. Now he thinks he has discovered the light of life, and feels as one that has lost his burden. Now he has found out the true religion; and all that he read or heard before, not affording him relief, is false doctrine, or legal preaching. Being treated also as one of the dear children of God by others of the same description, he is attached to his flatterers, and despises

those as graceless who would rob him of his comforts, by warning him against "the lie which is in his right hand."

I do not mean to say that all consolation which comes suddenly to the mind, or by the impression of a passage of Scripture, any more than by reading, or hearing, is delusive. It is not the *manner* in which we obtain relief, that is of any account, but *what it is that comforts us.* If it be the doctrine of the cross, or any revealed truth pertaining to it, this is Gospel consolation; but if it be a supposed revelation from heaven of something which is not taught in the Scriptures, that is a species of comfort on which no dependence can be placed. A believer may be so far misled, as to be carried away with it; but, if a man have nothing better, he is still an unbeliever.

If ever you obtain that rest for your soul which will bear the light, it must be, not from any thing within you, but by looking out of yourself to Christ, as revealed in the Gospel. You may afterwards know that you have passed from death unto life, by the love you bear to the brethren, and by many other Scriptural evidences; and from the time of your embracing the Gospel-remedy, you may be conscious of it, and so enjoy the hope of the promised salvation; but your first relief, if it be genuine, will be drawn directly from Christ, or from finding that in the doctrine of salvation through his death, which suits your wants and wishes as a perishing sinner.

Having thus warned you against certain by-paths, I shall conclude with a few additional directions concerning the good and the right way.

To believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, is to receive him as he is revealed in the Gospel. Christ is God's first gift, with, or for the sake of whom, he bestows all others; and

believing in him corresponds with it. If God first *give* Christ, and with him all things freely, we must first *receive* Christ, and with him all things freely. Hence it is said, "He that *hath* the Son, hath life; and he that *hath not* the Son of God, hath not life." We must receive him as that for which he was given, which was to be a sacrifice, or propitiation for sin, that God might be just in justifying poor ungodly sinners who believe in him. We must trust in him as the sole ground of hope, and plead for pardon only in his name. Receiving Christ as by a marriage-covenant, we become one with him, and so are interested in all that he hath done and suffered on earth, and in all that he is now doing at the right hand of God.

But though believing in Christ has a special respect to him as the way of acceptance with God, yet, when you receive him as your atoning Priest, you will also receive him for your King. When you "come" to him, as guilty and heavy-laden, for rest, you will at the same time "take his yoke upon you," and "learn his meek and lowly spirit." Though we are justified by faith *alone*, yet it is not by a faith *which is alone*, but which contains the seeds of universal obedience. In one view, namely, as receiving the Saviour, and uniting us to him, it *justifieth;* in another view, namely, as including the principles of a holy life, it *sanctifieth*.

In this way, reader, you will find rest for your soul. In your journey to the heavenly world, you will have much to do, much to oppose, and, it may be, much to suffer; but by a life of faith on him in whom you first believed, you will find strength equal to your day. Duties will be pleasant, temptations will be overcome, and the sufferings of this present life will work a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

No. 94.

THE

NON-CONFORMIST'S RELEASE.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

THE late Thomas Bradbury dined one day at the house of Mrs. Tooly, an eminent Christian lady in London, who was distinguished for love to Christ and his people. Mr. Timothy Rogers, who wrote the book on religious melancholy, dined there the same day; and after dinner entertained Mrs. Tooly and Mr. Bradbury with some stories concerning his father, who was one of the ejected ministers in the year 1662, and the sufferings he endured for his non-conformity. Mr. Rogers particularly related one anecdote that he had often heard his father tell with much pleasure, concerning a deliverance which he had from being sent to prison.

He lived near the house of Sir Richard Cradock, a justice of the peace, and a violent hater and persecutor of the dissenters; who sought to distress them by all the means which the severe laws then in being put in his power, particularly by enforcing the law against conventicles. He bore a particular hatred to Mr. Rogers, and wished to have him in his power; and hearing that he was to preach some miles distant, he hired two men to go as spies, to take the names of all the hearers they knew, and witness against Mr. Rogers and them. The thing succeeded to his wish: they brought the names of several persons; and Sir Richard warned such of them as he owed particular spite, and Mr. Rogers, to appear before him. Accordingly they all came with trembling hearts, expecting the worst; for they knew the violence of the man.

While they were in his hall, expecting to be called upon, there came in a little girl, a grandchild of Sir Richard's, about six or seven years of age. She looked at Mr. Rogers, and was much taken with his venerable appearance; and he being fond of children, took her on his knee, and made a great deal of her; and she was fond of him. At last Sir

Richard sent one of his servants to inform the company, that one of the witnesses had fallen sick, and could not be present that day, and therefore warned them anew to come on another day, which he named to them.

Accordingly they came; and the crime, as the justice called it, was proved. He ordered their *mittimus* to be written, to send them all to jail. Mr. Rogers, before he came, expecting to see the little girl again, had brought some sweetmeats to give her; and he was not disappointed; for she came running to him, and was fonder of him than she was the day before. She was, it seems, a particular favorite of her grandfather's, and had got such an ascendency over him that he could deny her nothing. She was withal a child of a violent spirit, and could bear no contradiction, as she was indulged in every thing. Once, when she was contradicted in something, she ran a penknife into her arm, that had near cost her her life. After which Sir Richard would not suffer her to be contradicted in any thing.

While she was sitting on Mr. Rogers' knee, and eating the sweetmeats which he gave her, she looked wishfully on him, and said, "What are you here for, sir?" He answered, "I believe your grandfather is going to send me, and my friends whom you see here, to jail." "To jail!" said she; "why, what have you done?" "Why, I did nothing but preach at such a place; and they did nothing but hear me." "But," said she, "my grandpapa shant send you to jail." "Ay, but, my dear," said he, "I believe he is now making out our *mittimus* to send us all there."

She ran immediately to the chamber where her grandfather was, and knocked with her head and heels till she got in, and said, "What are you going to do with my good old gentleman here in the hall?" "That's nothing to you," said her grandfather; "get you about your business." "But I wont," said she; "he tells me that you are going to send him and his friends to jail; and if you send them, I'll drown myself in the pond as soon as they are gone; I will, indeed." When he saw the girl was resolute and peremptory, it shook him, and overcame the wicked design he had formed to per-

secute the servants of the Lord. He stepped into the hall, with the *mittimus* in his hand, and said, "I had here made out your *mittimus* to send you all to jail, as you deserve; but at my grandchild's request, I fall from the prosecution, and set you all at liberty."

They all bowed, and thanked his worship. But Mr. Rogers, approaching the child, laid his hand upon her head, and lifting his eyes to heaven, said, "*God bless you, my dear child; may the blessing of that God whose cause you did plead, though as yet you know him not, be upon you in life, at death, and throughout eternity.*" And then he and his friends went away.

Mrs. Tooly listened with attention to the story; and looking on Mr. Rogers, said, "And are you that Mr. Rogers' son?" "Yes, madam," answered he, "I am." "Well," said she, "I am the girl your dear father blessed in the manner you have now related. It made an impression on me I could never forget." Upon this double discovery, Mr. Rogers and Mrs. Tooly found they had a superadded tie of love and affection. In answer to inquiries, she proceeded to relate, that after her grandfather's death, she was left sole heiress of his estate; and being in the bloom of youth, with none to control her, she ran after all the fashionable diversions of the time without restraint. But at the end of them all, she found a dissatisfaction that struck a damp to her heart, which she did not know how to get rid of, but by running the same fruitless round over and over again.

She contracted some slight illness, upon which she thought she would go to Bath, hearing that that was a place for pleasure, as well as health. When she came there, she was led in providence to consult an apothecary, who was a worthy, religious man. He inquired what she ailed. "Why, Doctor," said she, "I don't ail much as to my body; but I have an uneasy mind, that I can't get rid of." "Truly, Miss," said he, "I was so too, till I met with a book that cured me of it." "Books!" said she; "I get all the books I can lay my hand on, all plays, novels, and romances I can hear of; but, after I have read them, my uneasiness is the same."

"That may be, Miss," said he, "I don't wonder at it. But this book I speak of, I can say of it what I can say of no other I ever read. I am never tired of reading it; but can begin to read it again, as if I never had read it before. And I always see something new in it." "Pray, Doctor," said she, "what book is that?" "Nay, Miss," answered he, "that is a secret I don't tell to every one." "But could not I get a sight of that book?" said she. "Yes, Miss," said he, "if you wish, I can help you to it." "Pray get it me then, Doctor, and I'll give you any thing you please." "Yes," said he, "if you will promise one thing, I'll bring it you; and that is, that you will read it over carefully; and if you should not see much in it at first, that you will give it a second reading."

She promised faithfully she would. And after further raising her curiosity he gave it her. It was a New Testament. When she looked on it, she said with a flirt, "Poh, I could get that any time." "Why, Miss, so you might," replied the Doctor; "but remember, I have your solemn promise that you will read it carefully."

Accordingly, she began to read it; and it soon attracted her attention. She saw something in it which she had a deep concern in, and became more uneasy than before. She went back to London, for diversion; but all was in vain.

She lodged at the court end of the town, and one Sabbath went out with a friend to attend public worship, when, after passing several churches, they were providentially led into the Old Jewry. Mrs. Tooly's attention was much excited by the solemn manner of Mr. Shower, who was then the minister; and when he rose to pray, she was deeply affected. Having finished prayer, he took for his text, Psalm 116: 7, "*Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.*" In the hearing of this sermon, God manifested himself to her in mercy; and she obtained, what she in vain sought for elsewhere—rest to her soul, in Him who is the life and happiness of souls.

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No. 95.

NOW OR NEVER.

BY REV. RICHARD BAXTER.

WHATSOEVER THY HAND FINDETH TO DO, DO IT WITH THY MIGHT."—ECCL. 9 : 10.

WHO knoweth not that TIME cannot be recalled? That which once was, will be no more. Yesterday will never come again. To-day is passing, and will not return. You may work while it is day; but when you have lost that day, it will not return for you to work in. While your candle burneth, you may make use of its light; but when it is done, it is too late to use it. No force of medicine, no orator's elegant persuasions, no worldling's wealth, no prince's power, can call back one day or hour of time. If they could, what endeavors would there be used, when extremity hath taught men to value what they now despise! What bargaining would there be at last, if time could be purchased for any thing that man can give! Then misers would bring out their wealth, and say, "All this will I give for one day's time of repentance more." And lords and knights would lay down their honors, and say, "Take all, and let us be beggars, if we may have but one year of the time that we misspent." Then kings would lay down their crowns and say, "Let us be equal with the lowest subjects, so we may but have the time again that we wasted in the cares and pleasures of the world." Kingdoms would then seem a contemptible price for the recovery of time.

The time that is now idled and talked away; the time

that is now feasted and complimented away; that is unnecessarily sported and slept away; that is wickedly and presumptuously sinned away; how precious will it one day seem to all!

The most profane mariner falls a praying when he fears his time is at an end. If importunity would then prevail, how earnestly would they pray for the recovery of time, that formerly derided praying! What a liturgy would death teach the trifling, time-despising gallant; the idle, busy, dreaming, active, ambitious, covetous lovers of this world, if time could be entreated to return! How passionately then would they pour out their requests:

"O, that we might see the days of hope, and means, and mercy, which once we saw, and would not see! O, that we had those days to spend in penitential tears and prayers, and holy preparations for an endless life, which we spent at cards, in needless recreations, in idle talk, in humoring others, in the pleasing of our flesh, or in the inordinate cares and business of the world! O, that our youthful vigor might return! that our years might be renewed! that the days we spent in vanity might be recalled! that ministers might again be sent to us publicly and privately, with the message of grace which we once made light of! that the sun would once more shine upon us! and that patience and mercy would once more reassume their work!"

If cries or tears, or price or pains, would bring back lost, abused time, how happy were the now distracted, dreaming, dead-hearted, and impenitent world! If it would then serve their turn to say to the vigilant believers, "Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out;" or to cry, "Lord, Lord, open to us," when the door is shut, the foolish would be saved as well as the wise. But this is "the day of salvation!" this is "the accepted time." While it is

called to-day, hearken, and harden not your heart. Awake, thou that sleepest, and use the light that is afforded thee by Christ; or else the everlasting utter darkness will shortly end thy time and hope.

One life is appointed us on earth, to despatch the work on which our everlasting life depends, and we shall have but one. Lose that, and all is lost for ever: now you may hear, and read, and learn, and pray; but when this life is ended, it shall be so no more. You shall rise from the dead, indeed, to judgment, and to the life that you are now preparing for; but never to such a life as this on earth: your life is as the fighting of a battle that must be won or lost at once. There is no coming hither again to mend what is done amiss. Oversights must be presently corrected by repentance, or else they are everlastingly past remedy.

Now, if you be not truly converted, you may be; if you find that you are carnal and miserable, you may be healed; if you are an enemy, you may be reconciled to God; but when once the thread of life is cut, your opportunities are at an end. Now, you may inquire of your friends and teachers what you must do to be saved; and you may receive particular instructions and exhortations, and God may bless them to the illuminating, renewing, and saving of your soul. But when life is past, it will be so no more.

O, then, if departed souls might but return, and once more be tried with the means of life, what joyful tidings would it be! How welcome would be the messenger that brought it! Had hell but such an offer as this, and would any cries procure it from their righteous Judge, O what a change would be among them! How importunately would they cry to God, "O, send us once again to the earth! Once more let us see the face of mercy, and hear the offers of Christ and of salvation! Once more let ministers offer

us their help, and teach, in season and out of season, in public and in private, and we will refuse their help and exhortations no more; we will hate them, and drive them away from us no more. Once more let us have thy word and ordinances, and try whether we will not believe them, and use them better than we did. Once more let us have the help and company of thy saints, and we will scorn them, and abuse them, and persecute them no more. O, for the great invaluable mercy of such a life as once we had! O, try us once more with such a life, and see whether we will not contemn the world and close with Christ, and live as strictly, and pray as earnestly, as those that we hated and abused for so doing! O, that we might once more be admitted into the holy assemblies, and have the Lord's day to spend in the business of our salvation! We would plead no more against the power and purity of the ordinances; we would no more call that day a burden, nor hate them that spend it in works of holiness, nor plead for the liberty of the flesh therein."

He that would have Lazarus sent from the dead to warn his unbelieving brethren on earth, no doubt would have strongly purposed himself on a reformation, if he might once more have been tried; and how earnestly would he have begged for such a trial, that begged so hard for a drop of water! But, alas, such mouths must be stopped for ever with, "Remember that thou, in thy lifetime, receivedst thy good things."

"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." There is no return to earth again: the places of your abode, employment, and delight, shall know you no more. You must see the faces of your friends, and converse in flesh with men no more. This world, those houses, that wealth and honor, as to any fruition, must be to you as if you had never known them.

You must assemble here but a little while. Yet a little longer, and we must preach, and you hear the Gospel invitation no more for ever. That therefore which you will do, must presently be done, or it will be too late. If ever you will repent and believe, it must be now. If ever you will be converted and sanctified, it must be now. If ever you will be pardoned and reconciled to God, it must be now. If ever you will reign, it is now that you must fight and conquer. "O, that you were wise, that you understood this, that you would consider your latter end!" And that you would let those words sink down into your heart, which came from the heart of the Redeemer, as was witnessed by his tears: "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes."

There is no doing this work hereafter. Heaven and hell are for other work. The harvest doth presuppose the seed-time, and the labor of the husbandman. It is now that you must sow, and hereafter that you must reap. It is now that you must work, and then that you must receive your wages.

Is this believed and considered by the thoughtless world? Alas! do you live here as men that must live here no more? Do you work as men that must work no more, and pray as men that must pray no more, when once the time of work is ended? What thinkest thou? Will God command the sun to stand still while thou rebellest or forgettest thy work and him? Dost thou expect he should pervert the course of nature, and continue the spring and seed-time, till thou hast a mind to sow? Will he renew thy age, and make thee young again, and call back the hours that thou hast prodigally wasted on thy lusts and idleness? Canst thou look for this at the hand of God, when nature and Scripture assure thee of the contrary? If not, why

hast thou not yet done with thy beloved sins? Why hast thou not yet begun to live? Why sittest thou still, while thy soul is unrenewed, and all thy preparation for death and judgment is yet to be made? Wilt thou hear and be converted in the grave and hell? or wilt thou be saved without holiness? that is, in despite of God, who hath resolved it shall not be. O, ye sons of sleep, of death, of darkness, awake, and live, and hear the Lord, before the grave and hell have shut their mouths upon you! Hear now, lest hearing be too late! Hear now, if you will ever hear. Hear now, if you have ears to hear.

Look about you, and see what you have to do, and do it with your might.

1. Trifle not, but do it presently, without unnecessary delay.

2. Do it resolutely: remain not doubtful, unresolved, in suspense, as if it were yet a question with thee whether thou shouldst do it or not.

3. Do it with thy most awakened affections, and the serious intention of the powers of thy soul. Sleepiness and insensibility are most unsuitable to such works.

4. Do it with all necessary forecast and contrivance; not with a distracting, hindering care; but with such a care as may show that you despise not your Master, and are not regardless of his work; and with such a care as is suited to the difficulties and nature of the thing, and is necessary to the due accomplishment of it.

5. Do it not slothfully, but vigorously, and with diligence. "Hide not thy hand in thy bosom" with the slothful, and say not, "There is a lion in the way." The negligent, and the vicious, the waster and the slothful, differ but as one brother from another. As the self-murder of the wilful ungodly, so also "the desire of the slothful killeth

him, because his hands refuse to labor." "The soul of the sluggard desireth and hath nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat." Be not slothful in business, but be "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

6. Do it with constancy, and not with destructive pauses and intermissions, or with weariness and turning back. "The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that is of clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." "Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." "Be not weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

Apply these quickening precepts to all the duties of the Christian course. Be religious in good earnest, if you would be found such when you look for the reward. "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling." "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall seek to enter, and shall not be able." Many run, but few receive the prize: so run that you may obtain. "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?" Let the doting world deride your diligence, and set themselves to hinder and afflict you: it will be but a little while before experience change their minds, and make them talk differently. Follow Christ fully: be diligent and lose no time. The Judge is coming. Let not words, nor any thing that man can do, prevail with you to sit down, or stop you in a journey of such importance.

Please God, though flesh, and friends, and all the world should be displeased. Obey God, though all the world forbid you. No power can save you from his justice; and none can deprive you of his reward. One thing is necessary: do that with speed, and care, and diligence, or you are lost for ever. They that are now against your much and earnest praying, will themselves shortly cry as loud in

vain. When it is too late, how fervently will they beg for mercy, that now deride you for valuing and seeking it in time! But "then they shall call upon God, but he will not answer; they shall seek him early, but shall not find him: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of his counsel, but despised all his reproof."

Up, therefore, and work with all thy might. Let unbelievers trifle, that know not that the righteous God stands over them, and know not that they are *now* to work for eternity, and know not that heaven or hell is at the end. Let them delay, and laugh, and play, and dream away their time, that are drunk with prosperity, and mad with fleshly lusts and pleasures, and have lost their reason in the cares, and delusions, and vain-glory of the world. But shall it be so with thee, whose eyes are opened, who seest the God, the heaven, the hell, which they do but hear of as unlikely things? Wilt thou lie awake, as they that are asleep? Wilt thou do in the daylight as they do in the dark? Shall freemen live as Satan's slaves? Shall the living lie as still and useless as the dead? Work then while it is day, "for the night cometh, when none can work."

If your mind is sluggish, and you are forgetting your God and your latter end, and religion seems a lifeless thing, and you do your duty as if it were in vain, or against your will—*stir up your soul with the urgency of such questions as these:*

Question 1. Can I do no more than this for *God*, who gave me all—who deserveth all—who seeth me in my duties and my sins? When he puts me purposely on the trial what I can do for his sake and service, can I do no more? Can I love him no more, and obey, and watch, and work no more?

Question 2. Can I do no more than this for *Christ*—for him that did so much for me—that obeyed so perfectly; walked so meekly; despising all the baits, and honors, and riches of the world—that loved me to the death; and offereth me freely all his benefits, and would bring me to eternal glory? Are these careless, cold, and dull endeavors, my best return for all his mercy?

Question 3. Can I do no more, when *my salvation* is the prize—when heaven or hell depends upon it—when I know this beforehand, and may see, in the glass of the Holy Scriptures, what is prepared for the diligent and the negligent, and what work there is, and will be for ever, in heaven and hell on these accounts? Could I not do more, if my house were on fire, or my estate, or life, or friend were in danger, than I do for my salvation?

Question 4. Can I do no more for the *souls of men*, when they are undone for ever, if they be not speedily delivered? Is this my love and compassion to my neighbor, my servant, friend, or child?

Question 5. Can I do no more for the *church of God*—for the public good—for the peace and welfare of the nation, and our posterity—in suppressing sin—in praying for deliverance—or in promoting works of public benefit?

Question 6. Can I do no more, that have loitered so long, and go no faster, that have slept till the evening of my days, when diligence is the one certain evidence of my repentance?

Question 7. Can I do no more, that know not now but I am doing my last—that see how fast my time makes haste, and how I must be quickly gone—that know it must be *now* or *never?*

Question 8. Can I do no better, when I know beforehand what a vexatious and heart-disquieting thing it will then be, to look back on time as irrecoverably lost, and on

a life of trial as spent in vanity, while the work that we lived for, lay undone? Shall I now, by trifling, prepare such tormenting thoughts for my awakened conscience?

Question 9. Can I do no more, when I am sure I cannot do too much, and am sure there is nothing else to be preferred?

Question 10. Can I do no more, that have so much help—that have mercies of all sorts encouraging me, and creatures attending me—that have health to enable me, or affliction to remind and excite me—that have such a Master, such a work, such a reward? Who is less excusable for neglect than I?

Question 11. Could I do no more, if I were sure that my salvation lay on this one duty—that according to this prayer, it should go with me for ever—or if the soul of my child, my servant, or my neighbor, must speed for ever, as my endeavors speed with them now for their conversion? For aught I know it may be thus.

Alas! it is nothing but intoxicating prosperity, and sensual delights, and worldly diversions, that make you think well of ungodly slothfulness, and make you think contemptuously of a heavenly life.

Methinks I even see how you will passionately rage against yourself, and tear your heart with self-revenge—if grace prevent it not by a safe repentance—when you think, *too late*, how you lived on earth, and what golden times of grace you lost, and vilified all that would not lose them as foolishly as you. O, how will you wonder at yourself, that ever you could be so blind and senseless, as to be no more affected with the warnings of the Lord, and with the forethoughts of everlasting joy and misery! To have but one small part of time to do all that ever must be done by you for eternity, and say all that ever you must say, for your own or others' souls, and to have spent this in worse than

nothing! To have but one uncertain life, in which you must run the race that wins or loses heaven for ever; and that you should be tempted with a thing of nought to lose that one irrecoverable opportunity, and to sit still or run another way, when you should have been making haste with all your might! O, the thoughts of this will give you unutterable anguish in the day of judgment. That you had a time in which you might have prayed, with promise of acceptance, and had no heart to take that time! That Christ was offered to you as well as to them that entertained him; that you were called on, and warned, as well as they, but obstinately despised and neglected all! That life and death were set before you, and everlasting joys were offered to your choice, and you might have freely had them if you would, and were told that holiness was the only way, and that it must be *now* or *never;* and yet that you chose your own destruction! These thoughts will be part of hell to the ungodly.

Come away, then, from the snares of sinners, and the company of deceived, hardened men. Heaven is before you! Death is at hand! The eternal God hath sent to call you! Mercy doth yet stretch forth its arms! You have stayed too long, and abused patience too much already: stay no longer! O, now please God, and save yourself by resolving that "this shall be the day," and faithfully performing this your resolution. "Up and be doing:" believe, repent, obey, and do all this with all your might. Love him that you must love for ever, and love him with all your soul and might. Seek that which is truly worth seeking, and will pay for all your cost and pains, and seek it first with all your might, remembering still, it must be *now* or *never.*

And now that I should conclude, I am loath to end, for

fear I have not yet prevailed with you. What are you now resolved to do, from this day forward? It is work of endless consequence that we have been speaking of, which must be done, and quickly done, and thoroughly done. Are you not convinced that it is so? that ploughing and sowing are not more necessary to your harvest, than is the work of holiness in this day of grace to your salvation? You are blind, if you see not this; you are dead, if you feel it not: what then will you do?

O hear the God of heaven, if you will not hear us, who calleth to you, Return and live! O hear him that shed his blood for souls, and tendereth you now salvation by his blood! O hear without any more delay, before all is gone, and you are gone, and he, that now deceiveth you, torment you! Hold on a little longer in a carnal, earthly, unsanctified state, and it is too late to hope, or pray, or strive for your salvation. Yet a little longer, and mercy will have done with you for ever; and Christ will never invite you more, nor ever offer to cleanse you by his blood, nor sanctify you by his Spirit.

O what shall I do to show you how near you stand to eternity, and what is now doing in the world that you are going to, and how these things are thought on there? What shall I do to make you know how time is valued, how sin and holiness are esteemed, in the world where you must live for ever? What shall I do to make you know these things *to-day?* If every word I write were accompanied with bitter tears, I should not think it too dear, if I could but help you to such a sight of the things we speak of, that you might truly understand them as they are: that you had but a true awakened apprehension of the shortness of your day, of the nearness of eternity, and of the endless consequence of your present work; and how holy labor, and sinful loitering, will be regarded in the world to come for

ever. But when we see you sin, and trifle, and no more regard your endless life; and see also what haste your time is making, and yet cannot make you understand these things; when we know that you will shortly be astonished at the review of your present sloth and folly; and when we know that these matters are not thought of in another world, as they are among sleepy sinners here, and yet know not how to make you know it, whom it doth so exceedingly concern—this amazeth us, and almost breaks our heart.

Sinner, whatever the devil and raging passion may say against a holy life, God and your own conscience shall be our witnesses, that we desired nothing unreasonable, or unnecessary, at your hands.

The question that I am putting to you, is not whether you will be for this form of church-government, or for that; but it is, whether you will hearken in time to God and conscience, and be as busy to provide for heaven, as ever you have been to provide for earth. It is godliness, serious and practical godliness, that thou art called to. It is nothing but what all Christians in the world are agreed in. That I may not leave thee in any darkness from which I can deliver thee, I will tell thee distinctly, though succinctly, to what it is that thou art thus importuned; and tell me, then, whether it be that of which any Christian can doubt.

1. That which I entreat of thee is, but to live as one that verily *believeth there is a God;* and that this God is the Creator, the Lord and Ruler of the world; and that it is incomparably more our business to understand and obey his laws, and as faithful subjects to be conformed to them, than to observe or be conformed to the laws of man; and to live as men that do believe that this God is almighty, and that the greatest of men are less than crawling worms to him; and that he is infinitely wise, and the wisdom of

man is foolishness to him; and that he is infinitely good and amiable; that his love is the only felicity of man, and that none are happy but those that do enjoy it, and none that do enjoy it can be miserable; and that riches, and honor, and fleshly delights, are brutish vanities, in comparison of the eternal love of God. Is any of this a matter of controversy or doubt? Not among Christians, I am sure: not among wise men. It is no doubt to those in heaven, nor to those in hell, nor to those that have not lost their understandings upon earth. Live, then, according to these truths.

2. Live as men that verily believe *mankind is fallen into sin and misery;* and that all men are corrupted, and under the condemnation of the law of God, till they are delivered, pardoned, reconciled to God, and made new creatures, by a renewing, restoring, sanctifying change. Live but as men that believe that this cure must be wrought, and this great restoring change must be made upon ourselves, if it be not done already. Live as men who have so great a work to look after; and is this a matter of any doubt or controversy? Sure it is not to a Christian; and methinks it should not be to any man else that knoweth himself, any more than to a man in a dropsy, whether he be diseased, when he feels the thirst, and sees the swelling. Did you but know what cures and changes are necessarily to be made upon your diseased, miserable soul, if you care what becomes of it, you would soon see cause to look about you.

3. Live but as men that verily believe the *Son of God hath suffered* for sin, and brought the tidings of pardon and salvation, which you may have, if you will give up yourself to him who is the Physician of souls, to be healed by him. Live as men that believe that the infinite love of God, revealed to lost mankind in the Redeemer, doth bind

us to love him with all our hearts, and serve him with all our restored faculties, and to work as those that have the greatest thankfulness to show, as well as the greatest mercies to receive, and misery to escape. Live as those that believe that if sinners, who, without Christ, could have had no hope, shall now love their sins, and refuse to leave them, and to repent and be converted, and unthankfully reject the mercies of salvation, so dearly bought and freely offered them, their damnation will be doubled, as their sin is doubled.

Live but as men that have such redemption to admire, such mercy to entertain, and such a salvation to secure, and that are sure they can never escape, if they continue to "neglect so great salvation." And is there any controversy among Christians in any of this? There is not, certainly.

4. Live but as men that believe *the Holy Ghost is given* by Jesus Christ to convert, to quicken, and to sanctify all that he will save; that "Except ye be born again" "of the Spirit, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven;" and that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his;" and that without this, no mending of your life, by any common principles, will serve for your salvation, or make you acceptable to God. Live as men that believe that this Spirit is given by the hearing of the word of God, and must be prayed for, and obeyed; and not resisted, quenched, and grieved. And is there any controversy among Christians in any of this?

5. Live but as men that believe that *sin is the greatest evil*, the thing which the holy God abhorreth; and then you will never make a mock of it, as Solomon saith the foolish do; nor say, What harm is in it?

6. Live but as men that believe *no sin is pardoned without repentance;* and that repentance is the loathing and

forsaking of sin; and that if it be true, it will not suffer you to live in any sin, nor to desire to keep the least infirmity, nor to be loath to know your unknown sins.

7. Live as those that believe that there is *a life everlasting*, where the sanctified shall live in endless joy, and the unsanctified in endless punishment and woe: live but as men that verily believe a heaven and a hell, and a day of judgment, in which all the actions of this life must be revised, and all men judged to their endless state. Believe these things heartily, and then think a holy diligence needless, if you can. Then be of the mind of the deriders and enemies of godliness, if you can. If one sight of heaven or hell would serve without any more ado, instead of other arguments, to confute all the cavils of the distracted world, and to justify the most diligent saints in the judgment of those that now abhor them, why should not a sound belief of the same thing in its measure do the same?

8. Live but as those that believe this life is given us *as the only time to make preparation* for eternal life; and that all that ever shall be done for your salvation, must be now, just now, before your time is ended: live as those that know and need not faith to tell them, that this time is short, and almost at an end already, and stayeth for no man, but, as a post, doth haste away. It will not stay while you are taken up at stage-plays, in compliments, in idle visits, or any impertinent, needless things: it will not tarry while you spend yet the other year, or month, or day, in your worldliness or ambition, or in your lusts and sensual delights, and put off your repentance to another time.

O, for the Lord's sake, do but live as men that must be shortly buried in the grave, and their souls appear before the Lord; and as men that have but this little time to do all for their everlasting life, that ever must be done. O live as men that are sure to die, and are not sure to live till to-

morrow; and let not the noise of pleasure or worldly business, or the chat or scorns of miserable fools, bear down your reason, and make you live as if you knew not what you know; or as if there was any doubt about these things. Who is the man, and what is his name, that dares contradict them, and can make it good? O, do not sin against your knowledge: do not stand still and see your glass running, and time making such haste, and yet make no more haste yourselves than if you were not concerned in it. Do not, O, do not slumber, when time and judgment never slumber; nor sit still, when you have so much to do, and know all that is now left undone must be undone for ever!

Alas, how many questions of exceeding weight have you yet to be resolved in! whether you are truly sanctified? whether your sins be pardoned? whether you shall be saved when you die? whether you are ready to leave this world and enter upon another? I tell you, the answering of these, and many more such questions, is a matter of no small difficulty or concern. And all these must be done in this little and uncertain time. It must be *now* or *never*.

9. Lastly, Will you but live as men that believe that *the world and the flesh are the deadly enemies of your salvation?* and that "if any man love the world," so far "the love of the Father is not in him?" and as men that believe that, "if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if by the Spirit ye do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live;" and that those who are in Christ Jesus, and are freed from condemnation, are such as "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit?" Will you live as knowing that we must "make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof;" and must not "walk in gluttony and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness, in strife and envying;" but must "have our hearts where our treasure is," and our conversation in heaven; and being risen with Christ, must seek the

things that are above, and set our affections on them, and not on the things that are on earth?

Will you say that any of this is our singular opinion, or matter of controversy and doubt? Are not all Christians agreed in it? Do you not, yourself, profess that you believe it? Live, then, but as those that do believe it, and condemn not yourself in the things that you confess.

O, that you would hear us! Though we speak not to you as men would do that had seen heaven and hell, and were themselves in a perfectly awakened frame, yet hear us while we speak to you the words of truth, with some seriousness and compassionate desire for your salvation. O, look up to your God! Look out unto eternity; look inwardly upon your souls; look wisely upon your short and hasty time; and then bethink you how the little remnant of your time should be employed; and what it is that most concerneth you to despatch and secure before you die. Now, you have sermons, and books, and warnings: it will not be so long. Now, you have the Lord's day to spend in holy exercises, for the edification and solace of your souls. O, what invaluable mercies are all these! O, know your time, and use these with industry, and improve this harvest for your souls! For it will not be thus always: it must be *now* or *never*. You have yet time and leave to pray and cry to God in hope: yet if you have a heart and tongue, he hath a hearing ear; the Spirit of grace is ready to assist you. It will not be thus always: the time is coming when the loudest cries will do no good. O, pray, pray, pray, poor, needy, miserable sinner; for it must be *now* or *never*.

Would you not be loath to be left to the despairing case of many poor distressed souls, that cry out, "O it is now too late! I fear my day of grace is past; God will not hear me now, if I should call upon him: he hath forsaken me, and given me over to myself. It is too late to repent, too

late to pray, too late to think of a new life; all is too late." This case is sad; but yet many of these are in a safer and better case than they imagine; and it is not too late, while they cry out, "It is too late;" but if you are left to cry out in hell, "It is too late," alas, how long and how doleful a cry and lamentation will it be!

O consider, poor sinner, that God knoweth the time and season of thy mercies. He giveth the spring and harvest in their season; and all his mercies in their season; and wilt thou not know thy time and season for love, and duty, and thanks to him?

Consider that God, who hath commanded thee thy work, hath also appointed thee thy time. And this is his appointed time. To-day, therefore, hearken to his voice, and see that thou harden not thy heart. He that bids thee repent and believe in Christ, doth also bid thee do it now. Obey him in the time, if thou wilt be indeed obedient; he best understandeth the fittest time. One would think that, to men that have lost so much already, and loitered so long, and are so lamentably behindhand, and stand so near the bar of God and their everlasting state, there should be no need to say any more to persuade them to be up and doing.

I shall add but this: "You are never like to have a better time." Take this, or the work will grow more difficult, more doubtful, if, through the just judgment of God, it become not desperate. If all this will not serve, but still you will loiter till time be gone, what can your poor friends do but lament your misery! The Lord knows, if we knew what words, what pains, what cost would tend to your awakening, and conversion, and salvation, we should be glad to submit to it; and hope we should not think our labors, or liberties, or our lives too dear, to promote so blessed and so necessary a work. But if, when all is done that we can do, you will leave us nothing but our tears and moans

for self-destroyers, the sin is yours, and the suffering shall be yours. If I can do no more, I shall leave this upon record, that we took our time to tell you, that *serious diligence* is necessary to your salvation; and that God is the "Rewarder of them that diligently seek him;" and that this was your day, your only day. It must be NOW or NEVER.

Sinner, art thou still secure?
Wilt thou still refuse to pray?
Can thy heart or hand endure
In the Lord's avenging day?

See, his mighty arm is bared,
Awful terrors clothe his brow!
For his judgment stand prepared—
Thou must either break or bow.

At his presence nature shakes,
Earth, affrighted, hastes to flee;
Solid mountains melt like wax;
What will then become of thee?

Who his advent may abide:
You, who glory in your shame,
Will you find a place to hide
When the world is wrapp'd in flame?

Lord, prepare us by thy grace,
Soon we must resign our breath;
And our souls be call'd to pass
Through the iron gate of death.

Let us now our day improve,
Listen to the Gospel voice;
Seek the things that are above;
Scorn the world's pretended joys.

Newton.

No. 96.

THE

SAILOR'S FRIEND.

Sailor, will you permit a friend to converse with you seriously a few moments? Your life is a life of danger. To-day, you may be sailing under a cloudless sky; to-morrow, the storm may rage around you, and put your life in jeopardy. But there is a danger to which you are exposed, that is still more awful—*the danger of losing the soul.* Yet a Saviour has been provided, who not only delivers from this danger, but raises superior to the fear of every other. The following pages are intended to draw your attention to this danger, and to the only way of escaping it.

While the children of men are universally depraved, this depravity is not manifested by every individual in the same manner. One follows one vicious inclination, another, another. There are characteristic crimes attached to many professions; and yours has not failed to be thus distinguished. The crime of swearing, for example, has become common among seafaring people, to a proverb. Many are guilty of habitual swearing; and they attempt to apologize for their conduct by saying, "We mean no harm;" but the Lord hath said, that he "will not hold him guiltless who taketh his name in vain." Others indulge in violent anger upon the least opposition, and often gratify their rage in the most degrading manner, and even glory in this, as a display of courage; or should the thought come across their mind, that such conduct is condemned by the divine law, they endeavor to quiet conscience with such reflections as the following: "No man is perfect;" "I do not keep anger;" "I am

no hypocrite ;" and, upon the whole, " I have a good heart." There are others who take exquisite pleasure in riotous mirth and brutal dissipation. " Who hath woe ? who hath sorrow ? who hath contentions ? who hath babbling ? who hath wounds without cause ?" Is it not frequently the dissipated sailor ? Is not this a just description of some of your revellings, banquetings, and riotous meetings ? And mark the baneful effects which result from them even in this world. " Thou shalt be as he who lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth on the top of a mast. They have stricken me, thou shalt say, and I was not sick ; they have beaten me, and I felt it not : when shall I awake ? I will seek it yet again." Prov. 23 : 29, 34, 35.

Many, however, who would be shocked so far to transgress the bounds of external decency, are, nevertheless, " foolish and disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." Your conduct may be upright and honorable among men ; but how does your heart stand affected towards God ? Is he the object of your supreme delight ? Or is your heart wholly set on earthly things ? Are you grateful to your fellow-men for the favors they bestow upon you ? And do you feel no gratitude to Him who bestows upon you life, and breath, and all things ? If you say you are grateful to God, let me ask if your gratitude be proved to be genuine by searching his word to know his will, and by obeying all his commandments ? He who searcheth and knoweth the heart, requires that you should love him with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself. Whatever you may think of yourself, when tried by this righteous law you must be found guilty. For, in place of loving God, " the carnal mind," and this is the mind which all the children of men are possessed of by nature, " is enmity against God ; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." It is further declared, that " there is none righteous, no, not one : all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God ;"

and this is written, "that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God."

Allow me now to warn you of your danger, if you have hitherto neglected the great salvation. We presume you will acknowledge, from the view which has been given of the divine law, that you are a sinner. Hear, then, the solemn denunciation of Jehovah: "Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." There is only this life between you and that world where this curse shall be put into execution. And "what is our life? it is a vapor which continueth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." A thousand unforeseen accidents may land us in an eternal world, before we are aware. And you not only stand exposed to the diseases and calamities common to man, but, from the perilous nature of your employment, you may be said to be "in deaths oft." The swelling sea may, in a moment, wash you into the bosom of the great deep. Perhaps you have been more than once in scenes of the greatest danger, when the stormy winds appeared to carry death on their wings, and every billow seemed fraught with destruction; and, possibly, in spite of every effort, you were nearing a coast under the fearful apprehension of being dashed in pieces. You may have seen vessels, with which you were in company, hoist signals of distress, and been unable to afford relief to those who were ready to perish—yea, out of a wreck you may have escaped, while you saw some of your shipmates sink like lead in the mighty waters. In such calamitous scenes, have you not felt the pangs of a guilty conscience, and the fearful forebodings of a future judgment? Have you not been sensible, that although religion may be despised in life, it is indispensably necessary at the approach of death? In the hour of danger, have you not formed the resolution, that, if spared, you would never be the same again? But the storm has no sooner subsided, than you, like Pharaoh, have hardened your heart, returned to your old courses of iniqui-

ty, and become fully as unconcerned about an eternal world as before. And "do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise?"

You are thus every moment in danger of being hurried into an eternal world, and into misery with which all the sufferings endured in this world are not for a moment to be compared. Those who perish in their sins, perish for ever. The Scriptures represent all mankind as in a lost condition! and what renders their situation still more awful is, they are neither aware of their danger, nor at all concerned about it. Thus it was with the old world, "they planted and builded, they bought and sold, they married and were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and swept them all away." And although "the heavens and the earth which are now, are reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men," yet the same carelessness about an eternal world still continues. But however much men may put off the evil day, it is certain, that "upon the wicked God shall rain fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup." The "Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them who know not God, and who obey not the Gospel; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." 2 Thes. 1 : 7–9. What are all the desolations which the most dreadful storms ever produced, when compared with this? The dismal shrieks of the crew, when their vessel is going to pieces, can convey but a faint idea of the wreck of dissolving worlds; when men shall be calling to the rocks and mountains to fall on them, and cover them from the wrath of God and of the Lamb.

Do you ask, How shall I be safe at that day? There is no way of safety for any sinner, except through the atonement of Jesus. "He is a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest. He is a strength to the poor,

and a strength to the needy in their distress, a refuge from the storm, and a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall." Isa. 25 : 4. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life." Jehovah's equal Son assumed our nature, and endured that wrath which sin deserves. "He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and to put him to grief." The Lord laid on him the iniquity of all his people. The Saviour died for sinners, that they might live; and in proof of the Father's approbation of his atonement, he was raised from the dead, and "exalted to the Father's right hand, a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and the remission of sins."

Sailor! this is the only haven of safety for your immortal soul. His name is a strong tower, to which the righteous run and are safe, and there is no other refuge; for there is no other name given under heaven among men, by which you can be saved, but the name of Jesus; and by him, all who believe are justified from all things. Their sins and their iniquities God remembers no more. Permit me, then, to ask, *What think you of Christ?* Ponder the question; both your present and eternal happiness hinge upon right views of the Saviour. If he be your refuge and righteousness, he will be "altogether lovely" in your esteem; but if you still consider him "as a root out of dry ground," an object unworthy of either your faith or affection, you stand unsheltered from the wrath of God. We are warranted to affirm, that without faith in the Redeemer, and supreme love to him, you can neither live in safety, nor die in security; for it is written, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha"—accursed at the coming of Christ. But, praised be his name, the way of access to him yet is open. Jesus is still saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Therefore, take with you words, and turn to the Lord, and say, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, and we will render unto thee the offerings of our lips."

You have frequently felt the advantage of a well-sheltered roadstead, or safe harbor, during a disastrous storm. And when danger was apprehended, the desire of self-preservation has induced you to steer, with all possible speed, for a place of safety. May we not, then, entreat you to act as wise a part for the salvation of your soul, as, in many instances, you have done for the preservation of your life? Take an example of prudence from Noah, who, "by faith, when he was warned of God of things not seen as yet, prepared an ark to the saving of his house, by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." If you take shelter under Immanuel's wings, you will experience that "there is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Flee, therefore, for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before you in the Gospel." A drowning man would gladly lay hold of a rope cast to him as the means of deliverance—he would neither hesitate about the strength of the cord, nor question the compassion or ability of him who threw it. He might be disappointed. But if you lay hold on the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, you will most certainly be delivered from the gulf of eternal misery, and enjoy everlasting life.

Do not, then, delay attending to the things which belong to your everlasting peace. "The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." "Who art thou, O man, who despisest the riches of the forbearance of God, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" Perhaps you have grown old in the service of Satan; if so, it is surely time to listen to the voice of earnest entreaty: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his

thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." If the reader is young, let him attend to the gracious words of the Lord: "I love them who love me, and they who seek me early shall find me." There is a thousand fold more to be enjoyed in the unsearchable riches of Christ, than the most sanguine expectations can anticipate. To have the soul "filled with all the fulness of God," puts more gladness into the heart of the righteous, than the wicked enjoy, when their corn, and wine, and oil are increased. "O, taste and see that the Lord is good; they are blessed who trust in him."

In order to animate the hopes, draw forth the prayers, and stimulate the exertions of the church of God for the conversion of seamen, God hath declared to Zion, "Then thou shalt see and flow together, and thy heart shall fear and be enlarged, because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, and the forces of the Gentiles shall be brought unto thee." Isaiah 60 : 5. The achievement of such a noble conquest upon the watery world, where Satan has long swayed an almost universal sceptre, is calculated to make heaven and earth resound with joy. And the sailor's profane swearing shall give place to the praises of the Lord, from a pure heart. "Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the ends of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof." Isa. 42 : 10.

It is worthy of remark, that in these eventful days in which we live, the Lord is blessing the word of his grace in no ordinary degree, for the conversion of seamen. They are now putting their trust in Him, "who is the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of those who are afar off upon the sea." Psalm 65 : 5. God is granting to sailors "repentance unto life." This is calculated to afford you

the most heart-melting encouragement to return to the Lord, and confide in his mercy.

And consider, that the Gospel will prove either the means of salvation to you, or the means of increasing your punishment at last. The time is not far distant, when the hand of the writer shall moulder into dust, and the eye of the reader shall be closed in death: they may never meet but at the judgment-seat of Christ. Then the reception you give to these truths will be disclosed before an assembled world. If they be the means of leading to the oracles of God, and to Him, "to whom all the prophets gave witness," their design will be fully answered. But, if you live and die in the neglect of the great salvation, they will be an additional witness against you, and will add to your eternal anguish. We would, therefore, beseech you to be reconciled unto God. For he hath made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for the guilty, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. If you believe the declarations of the Scriptures concerning the death of Christ as an atonement for sin, and receive him as your Redeemer, you will enjoy the favor of God, and the good hope of everlasting life; and death will, in consequence, be stripped of all its terrors. In the midst of the stormy ocean, your mind will be at peace, trusting in Him who can say to the proud waves of the sea, "Peace, be still." You will be convinced that "not a hair of your head can perish without your Father;" and that, although he should see fit to allow you to perish in the sea, your spirit will immediately join those of "the just made perfect;" and at the great day, when "the sea shall give up the dead which are in it," your body, "fashioned like the glorious body of the Son of God, will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air; and so be for ever with the Lord."

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HISTORY OF OLD SHUSCO.

Old Shusco, as he was commonly called, was an Ojibwa Indian. It is not known where he was born, but it is believed to have been near the island of Mackinaw, in the strait which connects lakes Michigan and Huron. He was left an orphan when about ten days old, and came under the care of six different persons during his childhood and youth. When he was about fifteen, his grandfather undertook to make him a juggler, which is thought by the Indians to be an office of great honor and importance. They suppose that a juggler, or "mystery man," as he is sometimes called, can cure diseases, bring rain to water the earth,

cause the wild deer to come within reach of the hunter's spear, and do many other wonderful things.

To make Shusco a juggler, his grandfather blackened his face with coal, and made him fast ten days; the only food he had during this time being one cup of broth. This long abstinence nearly caused his death. But Shusco thought he had not been thoroughly made a "mystery man," and therefore fasted a second time, for five days, after which he was regarded as a wise man among his people. He now practised many deceitful arts upon them, to support his influence over their minds; and in addition, he became a notorious drunkard.

Shusco's wife went to hear the missionaries, and became converted. As Jesus now was precious to her soul, she felt concerned that her husband should know and love him too. His account of the efforts which his wife made to lead him to the knowledge of the Saviour, is in substance as follows. "I did not know that the practices of Indian jugglers were made up of great and sinful errors, till my wife, whose heart had been turned, told me that such was the case. I had no pleasure in hearing her speak of the Christian religion, and said I was satisfied with the religion of my forefathers. She still told me who God is, and what sin is, as it is written in his book. I had before believed that there was one Great Spirit; but she explained to me the true character of this Great Spirit, made me understand the sinfulness of the heart, and the way in which it is turned from evil to good by believing in Christ Jesus. She told me that the Holy Spirit alone could make my heart better; and that all who died without having felt this power, would be for ever miserable. I did not like these words, but I could not forget them. When I thought of them, my heart was not fixed and unshaken as it was before. I began to determine that I would not practise the juggler's arts any more, and that I would give heed to what was declared in the Scriptures."

It was in the year 1828 that Shusco felt convinced that he was a sinner, and for some time he was overwhelmed

with a view of his past sins. His wife observed that he was distressed, and asked him the cause. He replied, he was sick at heart. "You must pray," she said, "to God, and he will forgive you." "How can he forgive so great a sinner as I am? I have spent all my life in sinning against him." "But," she answered, "he will forgive you for the sake of Christ, who died for us, if you pray to him; for he forgave me, and I know that he will forgive you also." Shusco tried to pray, but found no relief. Two weeks passed away, and his sins still rose, as it were, before his view, so that it seemed to him that God could not have mercy on him. There was one evil habit to which he had given way, that he now earnestly wished to be delivered from—the sinful practice of drunkenness. He struggled and prayed against it, and against all sin. One night he arose from his bed in great agony of mind, and went to his usual place of prayer, and there he cried to God until, as he said, "he found his burden gone, the hard thing in his heart taken away, and he was not sick any more." In describing the morning that succeeded this conflict, he said, "My heart was filled with love to God and his children. I went out of doors. Oh, it was very pleasant: the sun shone bright; the trees and every thing around looked as they had never looked before. When I sat down to eat my breakfast, Sarah said to me, 'How do you feel now?' 'Very happy; my heart is not sick now, and I think I love God.' 'What day,' said she, 'is it to-day, Shusco?' I told her prayer-day, (the Lord's day.) 'We must not work to-day, but pray to God.' We both then prayed, and were very happy." Thus the first impulse of this converted son of the forest was, to remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.

He now thought of the missionaries at the island of Mackinaw. He had formerly shunned them, but now felt a desire to see them. "I want to tell them I love God now, and am very happy." The news of his conversion soon spread. All who heard of it said, "What hath God wrought!" At first it could scarcely be believed, that he

had become a disciple of Christ ; but when his deep humility, and love to all, especially to Christians, were seen, there was no room for doubt.

Shusco's lodge, or hut, now ceased to be a place for drunkenness and revelry ; for such it had ever been when strong liquor could be obtained. It became the resort of the Indians who loved to pray and praise. One circumstance will show how much he felt his dependence on the Holy Spirit, and how earnestly he sought his aid. He was told that some Indians were coming to the island where he lived ; and he had many fears, as some of them were his wife's relations, lest he should fall into temptation. When they came, he resorted, as usual, to prayer. One morning he was gone out a long time : his wife did not know what had become of him, and she began to fear that he had gone and joined her brethren in drinking. At length he returned, and told her he had been engaged in prayer, and that now he could visit her friends. He went, and found them lying round a pail of whiskey, in a state of drunkenness. They tried to induce him to drink ; but they could not prevail. They said, "Why is it, Shusco, that you will not drink with us now, when you always did formerly, and loved it so much ?" He replied, that the Lord helped him—that formerly, when he tried to leave off drinking, he attempted it in his own strength, and failed ; but that now he had obtained strength from God, and had no desire for ardent spirits, and was resolved never more to touch them. In the evening he observed to a missionary, he had never in his life been so happy as on that day. His being able to overcome a love for whiskey and other strong drink is the more remarkable, as the Indians will sell all they have to obtain it. Shusco was never known to taste it from the time of his conversion.

On Saturday it was the practice of Shusco to go round to all the huts of the Indians, to tell them that the following day would be the Lord's day, and that they must all go to the house of God. When away from the island of Mackinaw, he had no means of knowing the day of the week, as he

could not read. But he prepared a stick to serve as an almanac. Upon this he cut a notch for each day as it passed. At one time he was upon another island at some distance from home, making sugar, and he forgot to cut a notch; consequently, he missed a day. When the Lord's day came, he arose, ate his breakfast, and went out to work as usual. Soon a person who was passing, told him it was the sacred day. He immediately dropped his work, went into the hut, and told his wife what day it was. During the following week he returned home. As he entered the mission house, he was observed to look pale. The first words he spoke were, "I am very sorry; perhaps you will be very sorry for what I have done." "Why, what have you done, Shusco?" "I have broken the Sabbath-day," he said; and then he explained how it had happened. "I thought," he continued, "that I would come and tell you of it myself, and not wait till all the Christians heard of it." He then threw away the stick which he had hitherto used as an almanac, and prepared another.

He showed much gratitude for any kindness done to him. Whenever a friend gave him any thing, he would first look up, and thank the Lord, and then would express his gratitude to the giver. At one time he went in company with his wife to an island where they had previously planted potatoes, for the purpose of digging them. He found that the crop promised to yield abundantly. "Before digging a hill," said he, "we had a prayer-meeting, to thank the Lord for them."

Shusco's attachment to the word and the house of God was remarkable; and often did he visit the missionaries on week-days, to hear them read and explain the Scriptures. The missionaries being about to remove from the island, he said to them, "I see you all now, but by and by I shall see you no more in this world, and I shall be very lonely, for we shall have none to teach us on the Sabbath; but I shall soon see you all again in heaven; this makes me thankful. I feel that I shall soon go where Jesus is." After most of

the missionaries had left, a female member of the mission, before her departure, went to see Shusco. By her he sent a special message to another female member of the mission, who had anxiously sought his spiritual good, and said,

"Do not forget any thing I tell you. Tell her that I am well, and am very happy in my mind; and if I never see her again in this world, I hope to meet her in heaven. Still, I am but half happy; for I am half sorry because there are so many drunken Indians around, serving the devil as I once did. How good God has been to me, to make me one of his children. Why did he choose me when I was so great a sinner, and like these poor drunken Indians? But I pity them, talk to them, and tell them it is the work of the devil to do so; yet they will not listen. Sometimes they try to get me to drink; but God keeps me from it. At times I run away from them; then again I sit still in my hut when they come. Tell her, that perhaps the next time I am sick, I shall go home; and that she must pray for me, that I may see her in heaven. I will not forget what she has told me about the Bible; for a great many times I have gone to the mission house hungry, and she has fed me with God's word. Sometimes, as we sit here, we feel sad, because we have no one to read to us; still, we will remember what we have heard, and leave ourselves with God, for he knows what is best. When the Sabbath comes, I go to the house of God, and as I sit there, I am happy; for I think God is there. As I look round the house, and see how nice every thing is, I think how much more beautiful God's house above will be when I get there."

A desire to do good to others marked the conduct of Shusco. He was happy himself, and he desired that others might partake of the rich blessings which he had received through Christ Jesus. A few weeks before his death the family of his grandson came to visit him; all the family were in pagan darkness. Every morning he went to their hut, to talk and pray with them. Soon after their arrival he became so lame that he could not walk; but this did not

keep him from seeking to do them good; he crept to their hut upon his hands and knees.

The female friend before referred to returned, and hearing that he was ill, went to see him. After making some inquiries, he asked her to give him her hand, as he was now blind. "Perhaps now," he said, "I am going home. I am very sick, but it will only be a little while that I shall endure pain." "Do you feel happy?" she inquired; "and are you willing to go now, if it be the Lord's will?" "Yes, very willing," was the reply. "But do you not desire to get well again, if it be the Lord's will?" "Yes, if it is the Lord's will. I leave all in his hands. I thank the Lord for sending his children here to see me when I am sick. He is always very kind to his children, and merciful." He requested the friend to sing his favorite hymn. "I am too sick to join with you," he said; "but I want to hear it once more." She then sung the hymn beginning,

"On Jordan's rugged banks I stand,
And cast a wishful eye
To Canaan's fair and happy land,
Where my possessions lie."

On the morning before his death, his wife, seeing that he was very ill, sat down and wept by his side. "Do not weep," he said, "because I am going to leave you, for God will take care of you; but weep rather for your sins. God has promised to take care of his children. Look to him in prayer; he has promised, you know, that what we ask in prayer he will give us. Remember what I say, for perhaps this is the last time I shall speak to you. Perhaps you also will soon come where I am going. To-morrow, or next day, perhaps I shall go; but love God." His wife went out to fetch some wood; and when she returned he was committing his soul to his Saviour, and commending her also to his fatherly care; shortly after which he ceased to breathe. He was calm and happy to the last hour of his life, which ended on the 30th of September, 1837.

From this short history of a converted heathen juggler, we see that true religion shows itself in the same way in the experience of men, of whatever tribe or nation. The Gospel is not only suited to those born in a professedly Christian land, but to those also who have been brought up in the darkness of heathenism. When it is applied by the Holy Spirit, it produces the same confidence in God, the same love to Christ, the "like precious faith" in his blood and righteousness as the ground of a sinner's acceptance, the same delight in the Scriptures and in prayer, the same regard for the Sabbath and the people of God, the same hatred to sin and desire to "follow after holiness," the same good hope of heaven and zeal for the salvation of others. By these tests let us examine ourselves: are they to be seen in our lives and experience?

Let it also be observed, that not only those who have been born heathen like poor Shusco, but every man, must be converted, or he cannot be saved. "Ye must be born again." John 3 : 7. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 18 : 3. Men in every country, and in every age, inherit a fallen and depraved nature, and left to themselves, they go on adding sin to sin: so that every mouth is stopped, and all the world is guilty before God. Rom. 3 : 19. May the Holy Spirit renew our hearts, that we may be "new creatures in Christ Jesus;" then we shall joyfully receive that "faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," even the chief, 1 Tim. 1 : 15; then we shall find, to our unspeakable happiness, that "we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins."

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THE NEW BIRTH.

WHOEVER reads the Scriptures with serious attention, will perceive that some kind of *change* must take place in every person, in order to his becoming a real Christian. This change is described by a variety of names, the most remarkable of which is *Regeneration*, or *the New Birth*. The necessity of this change is often insisted on in the Bible, and nowhere more strongly than in our Saviour's discourse with Nicodemus, recorded in the third chapter of St. John's Gospel, where he says to that ruler, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

As this change is absolutely necessary to salvation, it is of great importance to know WHAT IT IS; especially, as there is much reason to fear that many mistake its true nature, and take the shadow for the substance. Let it be observed, then, that,

1. The new birth is a *great* change; the term must signify so much: it signifies that we must be very different from what we were before; we begin *a new kind of life*. Elsewhere, the same change is described by "passing from darkness to light," and "from death to life." All these expressions strongly denote a very great change. And this ought to be seriously considered; for what a light matter

passes for religion in general! a few lifeless forms, a little outward decency, or some faint desires, make the whole of it. But the Scripture expressions of "a new creation," and "a second birth," surely imply something more. They certainly denote *a very great change*.

2. The new birth is a *universal* change. Many are the devices of Satan. If he cannot keep sinners in total blindness and security, he tries to pervert their views of religion by causing them to mistake appearances for realities; or, by putting a part for the whole. Many are ruined for ever, by mistakes of this kind. Most men have, at one time or another, some serious thoughts about the soul, and religion, and eternity; and therefore do some things, and abstain from others, to still their fears and quiet conscience. But this *partial* change in point of morals, is often owing to some natural change in age, temper, and situation. Some men only exchange one sin for another which they love better. And others are very diligent in religious duties, to atone for the indulgence of their lusts, and to cover them from their own observation; and the more unwilling they are to part with a darling sin, the more ready are they to overdo in such duties as do not oppose the present current of unsanctified affections.

3. The new birth is an *inward* change. It is far more than a strict and regular course of outward actions or outward duties. It does not consist in partial *reformation* only, by which a man becomes less openly wicked than he was before; but there is an essential change of his whole character. God looks at the *heart*. "My son," says Solomon, "give me thine *heart*." The great sum of the law is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy *heart*." The prayer of the penitent is, "Create in me a clean *heart*, O God;" and the grand promise of the covenant is, "*A*

new heart will I give you." Now, the new birth consists in having this new heart.

If you ask what a new heart is: It is a heart set on new objects. The affections of the mind are turned from the world to God, and from the supreme love of self to the love of our fellow-men, and from living to ourselves to living to the glory of God.

This is very different from an *outward* change, which may arise from mere selfishness. A man may avoid excess in some sins, and practise some duties, for the sake of his health or his reputation among men, or from the slavish fear of hell. Without any real hatred to a sin, as sin, he may forsake it for fear of burning in hell for it; and without any love to God, he may perform religious duties; for though they are a heavy burden to him, he thinks it more tolerable than hell will be.

4. The new birth is a change, *wrought by the operation of the Holy Spirit.* We are by nature in a state of enmity against God, and this is what we cannot of ourselves remove, or overcome, because we love our sins. It is the sinfulness of man that interposes the obstacle to his regeneration; and for this he is criminal and inexcusable. And this is an obstacle which nothing but the grace of God can surmount. Hence the apostle John, speaking of true believers, says, "They were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1: 13. This doctrine is indeed greatly disliked by many, because it gives so humbling a view of our own character and state, and so much opposes our own pride and self-sufficiency. It is, however, the truth of God; and if we give any credit to the Scriptures, we must yield to it. Real Christians are said to "be born of God;" "born from above;" born of the Spirit. They are also said to be "quickened, who

were dead in sin." All which expressions plainly show that regeneration is the work of God, and not the work of man.

These remarks are intended to caution the reader against wrong notions of the nature of religion. Let us now go a step further, and point out with as much plainness as possible, WHAT IS THE CHANGE which is wrought in all the people of God, without exception: what it is which makes the difference between one who *is*, and one who is *not* born again.

The design of this change is to make man holy. Man was made at first in the image of God, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness; and he then enjoyed the most happy fellowship and communion with him. His duty and delight were the same. But by the fall he became obnoxious to the divine wrath, and disobedient to the divine will in his prevailing inclinations. He became disinclined to communion with God, and preferred the creature before the Creator. The design of regeneration is to restore man to the image of God, and to the exercise of love to him, so that his prevailing disposition may be the same as it was before the fall. The change, therefore, consists in these two things: that our supreme and chief end be to serve and glorify God; and that the soul rest in God, as its chief good.

1. Our *supreme and chief end must be to serve and glorify God;* and every other aim must be subordinate to this.

All things were made for the glory of God, that is, for the display of divine perfection; and every reasonable creature ought to seek this. But no natural man seeks it. The sin of man consists in withdrawing his allegiance from God, and refusing subjection to his will. The language of his heart and practice is, "Our lips are our own,

who is lord over us?" But the renewed person sees and owns his dependence upon God, his Maker's right to rule, and the obligation of all creatures to submit to his will.

In regeneration, God gives this disposition of mind; and gives it such force that it will prevail. The natural man seeks his own happiness supremely. This determines his choice of employments, enjoyments, companions. His religious actions are not chosen, but submitted to, for fear of worse. In short, he hath forgotten his subjection: God is dethroned; and self is honored, loved, and served, in his room. Hence, our Lord so much insisted on self-denial. "If any man," said he, "will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." To honor God in the heart, then, and to serve him in the life, is the first and highest desire of him that is born again. And hence we may learn the reason why profane and worldly men are generally self-righteous, while the truly pious abhor themselves, on account of sin. Natural men have no just sense of their obligation to glorify God in their thoughts, words, and actions; and therefore, whatever they do in religion, they look upon as meritorious, and think that something is due to them on that account. On the other hand, those who are born of God, know it is their duty to love God with all their heart, and serve him with all their might. They see that could this be perfectly done, it is no more than their duty, and there could be no plea of merit. But when they consider their sins, and how far short of duty they come in every instance, they ask for mercy, and not for reward.

2. In regeneration, the soul is brought to *rest in God as its chief happiness*, and habitually to prefer his favor to every other enjoyment. The believer sees that those, and those alone, are happy, whose God is the Lord, and that

those who are afar off from him must perish. All natural men place their supreme happiness in something that is not God. In this they all agree, though the ways in which they seek for worldly happiness are innumerable. There is but one way to peace, and if that is neglected, the insufficiency of all worldly enjoyments makes them fly from one earthly comfort to another, till they feel by sad experience the vanity of them all.

The change that takes place in regeneration, in no small degree, consists in a strong inward conviction of the vanity of worldly enjoyments of every kind, and a persuasion that the favor and enjoyment of God is infinitely superior to them all. Whatever other differences there may be, this will be found in every child of God, from the highest to the lowest, from the richest to the poorest, and from the oldest to the youngest. Every such one will be able to say, with the Psalmist, "There be many that say, Who will show us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and wine increased."

Thus it appears that in regeneration there is a renewal of the moral image of God upon the heart. The renewed man loves him supremely, serves him as his highest end, and delights in him as his chief good. This discovery, however, is but begun on earth. It is gradually improved in the progress of sanctification, and shall be fully completed at the resurrection of the just. The sum of the moral law is, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and soul, and strength, and mind. This is the duty of every creature, and regeneration consists in communicating this love to the soul, which gradually gains the ascendency, and habitually prevails over its opposite.

We may now consider BY WHAT STEPS AND BY WHAT MEANS THIS CHANGE IS BROUGHT ABOUT. It is true, it may be wrought at any time, in any manner, and by any means that to infinite Wisdom shall seem proper. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." John 3: 8. We shall only speak of such steps in the change as are, in substance, common to all true converts.

I.

THERE MUST BE A DISCOVERY OF THE REAL NATURE OF GOD.

Those who are in a natural state, are often described as lying in ignorance and darkness. They know not God. They have "the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts." Eph. 4: 18. In the change which the Holy Spirit accomplishes, this darkness, ignorance, and blindness, are dispelled. The understanding is enlightened, the true character and nature of God are discovered, and his glorious perfections seen in all their lustre. It will be easily perceived how indispensable is this part of the momentous work; for it is impossible that that should be a man's chief motive of action, or supreme object of desire, of which he has no degree of knowledge. God must be known in his real character, such as he is; and no false image placed in his stead. He must be seen in his spiritual nature as almighty in his power, unsearchable in his wisdom, inviolable in his truth; but, above all, he must be seen as infinite in his holiness and hatred of sin, impartial in his justice, and determined to punish the transgressor.

II.

THERE MUST BE A DISCOVERY OF THE INFINITE GLORY OF GOD.

He must not only be seen to be such a being as he really is, but there must be a sense of the infinite worth, beauty, and perfection of his character. It is one thing to know, and another to approve. Men may know things which they hate; and it must be so, when natures are opposite, the one sinful, and the other holy. There are many who cannot endure the scriptural representation of God, as holy and jealous. They oppose it by carnal reasonings, and give it the most odious names. The reason is plain. Such a view of God sets the opposition of their own hearts to him in the strongest light. The consequence is, God or themselves must be held in abhorrence. There must, therefore, be a discovery of the glory and beauty of the divine nature; an entire approbation of every thing in God, as perfectly right and faultless. No man can love that which doth not appear to him lovely. And this is the very foundation on which this change is built. While men continue in the love of sin, it is impossible they should see the beauty of infinite holiness; they will hate holiness, and fly from a holy God, as our first parents did in the garden.

III.

THERE MUST BE A CONVICTION OF SIN AND DANGER.

If an entire change be necessary, there must be a dissatisfaction with our past character: whoever is pleased with it, will neither desire nor accept of a change. Those who are not humbled for sin, will treat with contempt a purchased pardon and a crucified Saviour. This our Lord

tells us in the plainest terms. "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." To these his invitation is particularly addressed: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

From these passages and many others, it is evident, beyond contradiction, that there must be a deep humiliation of mind and sense of guilt and wretchedness, before a sinner can be brought unto God. The source of this humiliation is *a sense of the evil and desert of sin.* This is found in true penitents, and it is this that distinguishes repentance unto life from every counterfeit. Many have trembled through fear of punishment from God, who lived and died strangers to this change: they had no just sense of the evil of sin in itself; no cordial approbation of the holiness of God's nature and law, or of the justice of that condemnation which stands written against every transgressor.

Here is the cardinal point on which true repentance turns. Without this there may be a slavish terror, but no true humiliation. There is often as great, or a greater degree of terror, in convictions that prove fruitless, as in others which end in a saving change. The passion of fear in Cain or Ahab, was perhaps equal in degree to the fear of any true penitent recorded in Scripture. It is the principle that distinguishes their nature, and produces opposite effects. The one is alarmed through fear of the wrath of an angry God; the other is truly sensible of sin in all its malignity, and feels the sanction of a righteous, but violated law. The one feels himself *a miserable creature;* the other confesses himself *a guilty sinner.* The one is terrified, and the other humbled.

IV.

THERE MUST BE AN ACCEPTANCE OF SALVATION THROUGH THE CROSS OF CHRIST.

This is the last and finishing step of the glorious work. When this is attained, the evidence of the change is completed, the new nature exhibits all its parts. The spiritual seed is implanted, and hath taken root; and it will arrive, by degrees, in every vessel of mercy, to that measure of maturity which it pleaseth God each shall possess before he be carried hence.

Before conviction of sin, the Gospel of Christ almost always appears to be foolishness. Or, if education and example prompt the sinner to speak with reverence of a Saviour, there is no distinct perception of the meaning, nor any inward relish of the sweetness of Gospel truth. But those who have been wounded in spirit, begin to perceive its unspeakable value. The helpless state of the sinner makes him anxiously inquire, "What must I do to be saved? I have no excuse to offer, nor any shelter to fly to: the works, the word, and the providence of God, seem all to be against me. O, how fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God! I have awaked as out of a dream, and find myself fast hastening to the pit of destruction. What would I not do, what would I not give, for good ground to believe that my guilt were taken away, and my peace made with God!"

With what eagerness before unknown, does the sinner now inquire after the way of life! With what solicitude does he go forth by the footsteps of the flock! The Sabbaths, and ordinances, and word of God, are now quite different from what they were before. No more waste of that sacred time, in business or in play. No more serenity of

heart, because he had been regularly and constantly at church, but an astonishing view of the sins of his holy things; his careless, formal, heartless worship. No more indifferent, slothful, or critical hearing the word, that he may commend the ability, or deride the weakness of the preacher. Now, he hears that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself." The very news of salvation, the bare mention of pardon, is now a joyful sound. It rouses his attention, and he sets himself to weigh the important intimation. He hears that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Is there then," says he, "hope of mercy with God, whom I have so long forgotten, and so greatly offended? Hath he indeed loved a guilty world? Hath he loved them in so amazing a manner as to send his only begotten Son to save them from destruction? How great is the giver, how wonderful the gift, and how undeserving the objects of his love!"

This is a brief sketch of the steps by which this great change is effected in the heart.

It may be proper, before we close, to mention some of the principal EVIDENCES AND FRUITS OF REGENERATION.

The heart being renewed, the life will, of course, be reformed; and holiness, in all manner of conversation, will be its natural and genuine effect. He who is born again, discovers his new nature and life by new apprehensions of God—of himself—of the world—of Jesus Christ—and of the ordinances of his appointment.

The regenerate person has new views of *God*. He really and inwardly believes the being, presence, power, and providence of God. Formerly, God was seldom in his

thoughts; now, he can scarcely look upon any thing without considering its relation to him. What a lustre and glory does his opened eye behold in all the divine perfections! Above all, what an astonishing view he has of the divine goodness and love, which he sees in all his mercies, of the least of which he is not worthy!

He has quite new apprehensions of *himself*. Before, he thought himself his own master; but now he sees that he belongs to God. He remembers his Creator, confesses his obligations, and mourns for his transgressions. A converted sinner stands astonished at his former conduct. He wonders at the boldness of a poor guilty rebel, perhaps cursing and blaspheming, perhaps rioting in sensuality and lust. He wonders that the power of God did not arrest him in his course, and by some signal stroke make him a dreadful monument of his righteous indignation. He trembles to think of his former state; and it excites a lively acknowledgment of the riches of divine grace.

This is connected with, and increased by his views of the *world*, and of *worldly men*. The charm is now broken; the false colors are taken off from the world and all its enjoyments. How ardently did he once love them! How eagerly did he pursue them, and how did he envy the possessors of them! But now, he can never separate the idea of riches from temptation; and often considers the dreadful change which awaits those who are clothed in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day; but who will be, in a little time, tormented in hell-fire. Formerly, he valued persons by their station, genius, and wealth; but now, a Christian in a cottage appears more amiable than a blasphemer in a palace.

Further: the regenerate person has new apprehensions of *eternity*. Formerly, the vanities of time engaged his

thoughts, and eternity was seldom in view; but now, it is frequently and strongly upon his mind, so as to correct the false representations of sense, and oppose the unjust claims of earthly gratifications. Formerly, unseen things were treated as fabulous; now, there is such a discovery of them as weighs down all created things, and makes them feel light as a feather in a balance.

The regenerate person has also new views of *Jesus Christ*, the great and only Saviour of sinners. Before, he was "without form or comeliness," all the truths relating to his person and offices were treated with indifference; but now, the name of a Saviour is precious. The strongest language is too weak to express his gratitude and breathe out his love. "He is the chief among ten thousand; yea, he is altogether lovely."

Again, the regenerate person has new views of the *ordinances* of Christ's appointment. They were formerly his burden; now, they are his delight. Before, the Sabbath wore a sable garb, and an offensive gloom; now, he calls it a delight, the "holy of the Lord, and honorable." Now, he thirsts after the water of life, esteems, loves, and desires the word of God. He now readily joins the holy Psalmist in the fervent expressions of his affection to the truth and ordinances of God. "O how love I thy law; it is my meditation all the day. My soul thirsteth for thee. To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary."

In short, a change takes place in his whole character and conduct. "The love of God is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost," and is the commanding principle of all his future actions. The love of God is the source, the sum, and the perfection of holiness. All other duties naturally flow from it; nay, all other duties are

nothing but the expressions of it. The believer is under the constant influence of gratitude to God. It is not merely thankfulness to a bountiful benefactor for mercies which have not been deserved, but a deep sense of obligation to a Saviour, who "loved him, and washed him in his own blood;" so that his language is, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? O, that I knew how I might repay some small part of my infinite obligations! O, that I knew by what means I might magnify and do thee honor. Write thy laws in my heart, and enable me in every possible way to show that I love thee, because thou hast first loved me."

This plainly includes in it, and will certainly produce, the most sincere and fervent love to his fellow-creatures. If they are *bad* men, the same love to God, the same concern for his glory, which fills the Christian with grief and indignation at their daring offences, inspires the most ardent desire for their recovery and salvation. And as to *good* men, they are united by the tenderest and strongest ties, and love one another with a pure heart fervently.

Thus we have taken a brief view of this important subject—a subject in which every reader is deeply interested. Let me now earnestly entreat every one who peruses these pages, to bring the matter to a trial with regard to himself. As all men are either regenerate or unregenerate, let him ask, To which of these classes do I belong? We are dropping into the grave from day to day, and our state is then fixed beyond the possibility of a change. What astonishing folly to continue in uncertainty whether we shall go to heaven or hell, whether we shall be the companions of angels, or associates with blaspheming devils to all eternity! Nothing, therefore, can be more salutary, than that you make an impartial search into your present character

and state. If you have ground to conclude that you are at peace with God, what an unspeakable source of joy and consolation! If otherwise, there is no time to lose in hastening from the brink of the pit. Be persuaded, then, to enter immediately on the duty of self-examination. Let every one, without exception, take up or renew this grand inquiry: "Am I in Christ? That is, Am I a new creature, or not? Am I a child of God? or do I still continue an heir of hell?"

Let me repeat in your ears this solemn truth, and may God Almighty, by his Spirit, carry it to your hearts: "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." And remember this is a *great*, a *universal*, an *inward*, a *divine* change. It is far more than mere outward reformation. It is far more than baptism, or any outward ordinance. Every child of Adam is, by nature, at enmity with God; and must either be renewed in the spirit of his mind, or perish eternally. It is of no consequence what you are as to outward station, if you are not reconciled to God: it is of no consequence what you are as to outward professions, if you are not inwardly changed. God is no respecter of persons; and, therefore, whether you are high or low, rich or poor, whether you are of one denomination of Christians, or another, if you have not been the subjects of a renewing and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, you are children of wrath; and if you die in that condition, must "go away into everlasting punishment."

But is there *now* no relief? Yes, there is: Jesus is "able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him." Fly to him for refuge. There is no sin of so deep a dye, but the blood of Christ is sufficient to wash it out. There is no slave of Satan so loaded with chains, but Christ is able to set him free. If you perish, it is of yourself. I have given you warning, from a sincere and ardent concern for

your everlasting interest; and may God himself, for Christ's sake, by his Holy Spirit, effectually persuade you to comply with it.

MY SPIRIT SHALL NOT ALWAYS STRIVE.

Say, sinner, hath a voice within,
Oft whispered to thy secret soul,
Urged thee to leave the ways of sin,
And yield thy heart to God's control?

Hath something met thee in the path
Of worldliness and vanity,
And pointed to the coming wrath,
And warn'd thee from that wrath to flee?

Sinner, it was a heavenly voice—
It was the Spirit's gracious call;
It bade thee make the better choice,
And haste to seek in Christ thine all.

Spurn not the call to life and light,
Regard in time the warning kind;
That call thou may'st not always slight,
And yet the gate of mercy find.

God's Spirit will not always strive
With harden'd, self-destroying man;
Ye who persist his love to grieve,
May never hear his voice again.

Sinner—perhaps this very day
Thy last accepted time may be;
Oh, shouldst thou grieve him now away,
Then hope may never beam on thee.

No. 99.

THE BENEFITS

OF

SANCTIFIED AFFLICTIONS.

APOSTATE man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward. This is the language of inspiration, and it is the language of experience. While God is daily conferring favors upon us, he is at the same time bearing constant testimony against our sins, by giving to us the cup of sorrow. Disappointed hopes, losses, pains, and death, must be endured by man. Roses, scattered by the side of his path through life, are found to grow on thorns. His present state is a state of disappointment and trial.

It ought to be our constant endeavor to derive benefit from our afflictions. If they be sanctified to us, as they are to all God's people, we shall be enabled to say, with the Psalmist, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes." He found his trouble operating for his spiritual and everlasting good. He was excited by them to learn God's statutes, or to study and obey his revealed will. Divine truth became sweeter than honey to his taste. His love to God's character, law, government, and grace was increased, and he was engaged to run the way of his commandments with greater delight.

It is the design of this Tract to point out some of the EVIDENCES AND BENEFITS OF SANCTIFIED AFFLICTIONS; and if it shall be the means of imparting true consolation to any afflicted soul, the writer will have an abundant reward.

1. Our afflictions promote our best good when we *acknowledge and adore the hand of God in bringing them upon us.* God is the universal Creator. All creatures and events, both in the natural and moral world, are, and for ever must

remain under his government. If creatures could hold their existence of themselves, they would become independent of God, and might control his designs. Some contend that God maintains a general providence, but not a particular one, over the works of his hand; and represent it as beneath the dignity of the Infinite Mind to regard the minute parts of creation. But let such persons consider, that a general providence implies the government of all the particular things of which it is composed, and that all parts of the divine plan are connected, and therefore a denial of a particular providence goes to a denial that God governs the world. There may be a connection, which is discerned in the divine mind, between the opening of a flower and the rise of a nation; the direction of a mote, and the fall of an empire. Though such knowledge is too high for us, it is not too high for the mind of Jehovah, and heightens the idea of his infinite greatness. When we consider him as governing all creatures and events, both great and small, we may discover something of that glory which demands our admiration and praise.

It is abundantly revealed in the Holy Scriptures, that the evils which men endure are inflicted by divine Providence. "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" Amos 3 : 6. "Out of the mouth of the Most High proceedeth not evil and good?" Lam. 3 : 38. It is unnecessary to spend time in proving a doctrine which is abundantly revealed in the inspired volume. If it were a fact that our troubles were the fruit of accident or chance, or blind fate, we must be inconsolable under them. But we are certain that "affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground."

We may be rationally convinced, that the evils which we endure proceed from the hand of God; and yet we may practically refuse to acknowledge and adore his agency. There is a wide difference, in the present case, between ac-

knowledging and *murmuring*, and acknowledging and *adoring*. The former conduct characterizes the wicked; the latter characterizes the righteous. What a vast difference was there between the acknowledgment which Pharaoh paid to Jehovah, and that which was paid by Moses. Pharaoh was compelled to acknowledge the hand of Jehovah in bringing the plagues upon Egypt; but while he made this confession, his heart rose up against the church of Israel and their God. Moses acknowledged the divine hand in bringing judgments upon the Egyptians and the Israelites, and at the same time he adored or reverenced him who was revealing his wrath against the disobedient. The devils acknowledge the existence of the only living and true God; but in the moment of the confession, they tremble with horror, and are filled with pain. All the godly have a pleasing belief in the divine government, in the most trying seasons, and rejoice, in a higher or lower degree, in the dominion of infinite wisdom and love. They see the hand which is stretched out in a way of correction, as well as in a way of mercy.

When Job's substance and children were taken from him in one day, he said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." And when the Lord smote him with "sore biles, from the sole of his foot unto his crown, and he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal, and sat down among the ashes," he replied to the bitter reproaches of his wife, "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips." The apostle saith, Heb. 12: 9, "Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live?" From these instances, with many more which might be adduced, it is evident that pious men acknowledge and adore the divine hand, in laying the load upon them. If, when we are afflicted, we eventually find

our minds driven further from God and a cheerful acknowledgment of his chastising hand, we have just cause to be alarmed. But let us not conclude in a moment, when we first enter into the furnace of affliction, that God hath forsaken us, because we have not that lively sense of his perfection and his providence which we may have had heretofore. If we find within ourselves, that amidst all the tumult and darkness of our minds, we have a fixed determination to trust in God though he slay us, we shall find some encouragement to hope that hereafter light will break in upon our minds, and that the present scourge will yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

So long as we look no higher than second causes to find the author of our troubles, we shall pay no homage to God, and shall murmur at his dealings. Let the heart be placed upon the perfect character and government of the Most High, and we shall be stilled from complaining of our lot, and shall, with Moses, Job, David, and other saints, both in the Old Testament and in the New, feel a holy reverence towards Him who is pleased to chastise us. No affliction for the present is joyous, but grievous; but when it is sanctified, it produces a peace and a joy to which the men of this world are strangers. All things work together for the good of them that love God, and the light and momentary afflictions of this life will work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory in the world to come.

2. It is good for us to have been under the rod, when we *are led to a clear discovery of our sins, and a cordial acknowledgment of the divine justice and wisdom in our chastisement.* "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou, in faithfulness, hast afflicted me." The eyes of the pious Psalmist were opened more clearly than ever upon his sins, and he felt that God was perfectly just in the present affliction.

Job says, in his address to the Lord, near the close of

his long and heavy trials, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Observe the language of the faithful, while Jerusalem lay in ruins, and its inhabitants were either slain by the sword, or gone into captivity: "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord." The penitent Jews, after their return from Babylon, confessed that God was just in all that he had brought upon them; that he had done right, and that they had done wickedly.

The primitive Christians, while they were in bonds and imprisonment, and were exposed to meet death in its most dreadful forms, had a deep impression that they were among the chief of sinners, and thought themselves honored by being accounted worthy to suffer shame for Christ's name.

Even Christians have but a small degree of knowledge of the depravity of their hearts, and the sins of their lives, until they are called to pass through some painful trials. Prosperity is apt to lull the mind to sleep, to abate its devotion, to slacken its watchfulness, and to throw a languor over all its exertions. How natural is it for us to say, when our mountain seemeth to stand strong, that we shall never be moved, or that adversity will never overtake us! When Christians are indulging this frame, they are preparing the way to meet with some disappointment, worldly loss or bereavement, or to be scourged in their own persons. When God is pleased to afflict them, they will be roused to self-examination and prayer. They will not pretend to the knowledge of all the reasons why God is now contending with them, but they will see enough in themselves to discover to them the fitness, the necessity, and the justice of the present rod.

Instead of wondering at the present correction, they will rather wonder that they have escaped so long, and have

enjoyed so much prosperity. Saith the patient Christian in his afflictions, "I am convinced that I am a great sinner; and that I deserve all the expressions of divine wrath against the wicked, in time and in eternity. How have I 'forsaken God which made me!' 'how have I lightly esteemed the Rock of my salvation!' I have refused to give God the throne in my heart, and have been setting up idols there. I have shamefully neglected to reverence God's name and day, and have attended the ordinances of his house with coldness and indifference. I have not placed a just value on the faith once delivered to the saints, and have not been valiant for the truth upon the earth. How unfaithful have I been in the discharge of the duties which I owe to my family, to the church, and to the commonwealth! I have neglected to instruct, counsel, and warn those to whom I have had near access; and have said to them, by my example, that religion is of no importance, and that worldly glory constitutes the happiness of man. What abundant cause have I to mourn before God, that I have indulged so much malice towards my fellow-men! that I have been so unwilling to forgive my enemies; and have been so ready to rejoice at their overthrow! What impure thoughts have I indulged, and how much have I done to encourage the licentious in their conduct! I have not maintained the justice, the mercy, or the truth, which the divine law and the Gospel require. I have coveted my neighbor's substance and enjoyments; I have envied his superior prosperity and gifts, and have been discontented with the place assigned me in the world.

"How often have I despised the only Saviour of sinful men! And since I have been numbered among his followers, how unfaithful have I been to the duties of my holy profession! I have solemnly engaged to view myself as my own no more, and to be wholly devoted to the Redeemer, in life and in death. How cold have been my affections

towards him, who is the great Immanuel, God with us! In how many ways have I sought to shun the cross, and to enjoy the smiles of an ungodly world! Christ's kingdom is of infinite worth, but I have refused to promote it as became me, and have symbolized with the god of this world. I have abundant cause for deep humiliation, that I have abused my mercies, and have been so incorrigible under afflictions. Many promises of amendment have I broken, and I have paid little regard to my covenant bonds. I might justly be crushed by the present rod, and become a monument of God's everlasting wrath. I should have no just cause of complaint, were I deprived of all hope, and doomed to dwell in the regions of eternal despair. But O, thou God of grace! save me, I beseech thee! Correct me in measure and in mercy. Let it be the fruit of this affliction to take away sin, and to prepare me for the service and enjoyment of thyself for ever!" When such are the breathings of the heart, in a time of trouble, affliction is not sent in vain.

When God's children are under the rod, they will be convinced of the wisdom as well as the justice of the present chastisement. O Christian, is thy worldly substance taken from thee? Thou wilt be led to inquire, whether thy heart has not been too much placed upon it, and whether this extraordinary attachment has not rendered it necessary that thy present loss should be sustained.

Set thy affections more abundantly on things which are above, and be more engaged than ever in laying up a treasure in heaven. Hast thou met with ingratitude and unkindness from one of thy fellow-creatures, on whom thou hast conferred many benefits? Let this requital of evil for good serve to teach thee the folly of trusting in an arm of flesh, and engage thee to trust in the living God. Hast thou fondly doated on the person who now seeks to pierce thee to thy heart? Let the reception of evil for good bring thy benevolence to the trial, and engage thee to imitate thy Saviour

in the forgiveness of enemies. Hath God taken from thee, by death, thy bosom friend, or the child of thy love? Ask thyself whether the deceased had not taken the place of God in thy heart, and rendered the present blow a necessary one for thy best good. Be assured that thou must be divorced from thy idols, or from God. And as thou art one of his children, he will take from thee the object of thy idolatrous love. Thy case would be deplorable indeed, if under thy bereavement thou couldst justly say, with Micah, "Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?"

Art thou in a state of languishment, or pain of body, and are wearisome days and wearisome nights appointed unto thee? Inquire whether thou wast not too confident of the continuance of health in former days, and whether thou wast not unthankful to Him who was the health of thy countenance. Perhaps thou hadst some favorite plan to accomplish, and wast confident that thy strength and vigor would be continued until thou hadst realized thy strong hopes. Is it not just and wise in God to convince thee of thy arrogant presumption, by making thee to feel that thy breath is in thy nostrils, and that thou must soon be laid in the grave? Hast thou not cause to bless God, that he is now teaching thee the vanity of this world, and preparing thee for the joys of a glorious immortality?

We are inclined to say, that some other affliction would be better suited to promote our best good, than the present; and that some other time would be a more fit time than the period that was chosen. But how incompetent judges are we, what is wisest and best to be done! If we were to be our own judges in the present case, we should select a trial, and a time of suffering, which would lead us to avoid the cross, and leave us strangers to our own hearts. We might, indeed, by planning for ourselves, be involved in far greater difficulty than the present, and sink into despair. God, who knoweth our particular frame and temper, best knoweth

when and how to try us, and how long to continue us under the rod. If we derive spiritual benefit from the afflictions which we endure, we shall be humbled for our sins, and we shall be still and know that the Lord he is God. We shall no longer say, any other trouble rather than the present, and any other time to endure it rather than the present; but we shall say, "O Lord, thy will be done, both as to the kind and continuance of affliction. Oh, cause me to adore thy justice and thy wisdom, and humbly to implore thy mercy."

Those who make the knowledge of their hearts their study, will not pass through days of adversity without discovering, more than ever before, their sins, nor without viewing them in new points of aggravation. Sins which had been forgotten will be called to remembrance, and the aggravating circumstances which attended them will rush upon the mind. In the view of them, the humble penitent will feel that the divine justice would have shone with distinguished brightness in his eternal condemnation, and will be excited with great and earnest importunity to implore the divine mercy.

3. The subjects of sanctified afflictions will *find the grace of the Gospel peculiarly endeared to them.* "Before I was afflicted," saith the Psalmist, "I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." Here we may observe, that the pious Psalmist was led, by means of his afflictions, to love more than ever the book of God's grace, and to conform to it in his practice. "We glory in tribulation; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." Rom. 5 : 3–5. "For, as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. We had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." 2 Cor. 1 : 5, 9.

The more deeply any are impressed with a sense of their sins, and of the divine justice in their punishment, the more fully are they convinced of the necessity of Gospel grace, and the more clearly do they see the glory of the Gospel plan of salvation. Seasons of suffering have often proved seasons of high enjoyment to the people of God. The patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and the primitive Christians in general, under their trials, were favored with abundant communications of divine grace, and rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. We may observe, at the present time, that those who appear to be true Christians, shine brightest when in the furnace. To them, Christ appears peculiarly precious, and they appear, at times, to be cheerful in giving up all things for his sake. They discover that they count not their lives dear unto themselves, that they may finish their course with joy.

Christians, when under the rod, read the Holy Scriptures with a special attention and uncommon engagedness, and manifest a strong relish for the truths contained in the inspired volume. They now feel that God's word is a light unto their feet and a lamp unto their path, while passing through the darkness and temptations of the present world.

"This is my comfort," says the Psalmist, "in my affliction, for thy word hath quickened me. Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage. The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver. How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth." Afflictions are necessary to lead us to understand many parts of the Bible, particularly those which relate to sufferings, and the divine support under them. Who understandeth, like the good man under the rod, how tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope? Who understandeth, like the patient sufferer, how consolation aboundeth by Christ, as the fruit of chastisement? The best of men

do not know how much they trust in themselves and in the world, until their attachment is tried, and broken by the rod. Now they see more fully than ever their own folly in placing such confidence in the things which perish. They will bless God for ever for that discipline which hath opened to them the pride and deceitfulness of their hearts, and hath brought them to discern the worth and glory of that kingdom which cannot be moved. True Christians have rarely so clear evidence of their adoption, as when their earthly hopes are dashed in pieces.

4. Sanctified afflictions lead men to be more attentive to the *duties which they owe more immediately to God*. What a wide difference is there, in ordinary cases, between the prayers which are made in a day of adversity, and those which are made in prosperous seasons! Those who feel themselves to be burdened with guilt and sorrow, and are convinced that God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him, will go to the throne of grace, and seek for mercy.

Prayer is not to them an unwelcome task, but is the delight of their souls. When they find Satan and their wicked hearts striving to throw hinderances in the way of the performance of this duty, they will not rest until they have in some degree obtained the victory, and can fervently pour out their hearts to God. He is pleased sometimes remarkably to fill their mouths with arguments, when all worldly appearances are against them, while they are bowing at his footstool They are uncommonly assisted in praying for themselves, for their families and friends, for enemies, for the whole human race, and especially for the peace and prosperity of Zion.

It is painful to those who derive benefit from their afflictions, to be deprived, by ill health or other means, of attending on the worship and ordinances of God's house. These are objects for which they find an increasing relish, as they are emptied from vessel to vessel, by their trying changes. Hence, when they are excluded from the place

they love, they can adopt the language of David, when he was wandering in the wilderness of Judea, by the persecutions of Saul: "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee. My soul thirsteth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see thy power and thy glory, as I have seen thee in the sanctuary." Psalm 63 : 1, 2.

5. Sanctified afflictions are instrumental in *stirring up persons to a faithful discharge of the duties of the second table of the law.* I here mention particularly the duty of compassion and kindness to those who are afflicted. We are commanded to bear one another's burdens, to live as brethren, to be pitiful, and to be courteous. There are men whose inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations. They are intoxicated with their prosperity, and presume that no painful changes await them. They look with contempt upon the needy and afflicted, and are disposed to charge them with bringing their troubles on themselves, or continuing them by their imprudence or timidity. But Christianity speaks a very different language. "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body." Heb. 13 : 3. Nothing teaches persons to feel for the children of sorrow, like experience in the school of adversity. This eminently qualifies the followers of the compassionate Saviour to sympathize with the afflicted, and to strive to lighten their woes. They extend their compassionate feelings to all who are in trouble, and especially to those who are the friends of the Redeemer. They will strive to relieve the wants of those who are needy, and to bind up the broken spirit. "Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." 2 Cor. 1 : 4. They labor to turn the attention of their afflicted fellow-mortals to the only source

of consolation, and to prepare them for deliverance in the present world, and immortal glory in the world to come. They can cheerfully welcome to their bosoms the humble and patient disciples of the blessed Saviour, however much they are despised by the ungodly world. Knowing these to be the excellent of the earth, they are compassionate and kind to them for their Lord and Master's sake, and rejoice in the blessed prospect of meeting them in the paradise above, where all sorrow and crying shall be done away.

The enemies of the primitive Christians remarked concerning them, when they saw their strong mutual affection under their fiery trials, "Behold how these Christians love one another!" The disciples of Christ sometimes, in the present world, fall out with each other, and give mutual wounds. But joint sufferings have always been found to check their animosities, and to unite them in the closer bonds of affection. When such are the fruits of our afflictions, we have not been smitten in vain, but shall derive peace and comfort from them in this world, and shall receive a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory in the world to come.

6. Sanctified afflictions are instrumental in *weaning men from earthly attachments, and in ripening them for death and heaven*. The pious patriarchs confessed themselves, amidst their troubles, to be pilgrims and strangers on the earth, and to be looking for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. The primitive Christians took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

Pious persons, who have suffered many pains, and endured many outward losses and bereavements, look upon this world as an empty place, and not by any means worthy to be sought as a portion. While they give thanks to God for the innumerable temporal blessings they have received, they dare not rest their hope of support and enjoyment on any thing beneath the skies.

They can discern no earthly prospect which has unadulterated charms; but every thing around them wears the appearance of decay and dissolution. They watch and pray that they may not be ensnared by earthly allurements, and that they may be in constant readiness for the approaching change by death. The eternal world grows more and more familiar to their minds, and their thoughts are much employed on that state into which they are soon to enter. Many of their meditations are employed on death and on the future judgment. Although they cannot determine what their views will be when they shall be called to walk through the dark valley, yet they believe that the end of the upright man will be peace. They are much in prayer to God that he will not forsake them in the hour of death; and believe that the only way in which divine consolation is then to be expected, is in a humble walk with God, and in the faithful discharge of every duty, while life is continued. What a firm hope, and what animating prospects were enjoyed by the apostle, when he could declare, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord!" 2 Cor. 5: 1, 2, 8. How earnestly desirous was our apostle, that Christ might be magnified in his body, whether by life or by death! He could say, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor; yet what I shall choose I wot," or know, "not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better." Phil. 1: 21–23.

Let not Christians in general be discouraged because they have not risen to the attainments of the apostle Paul.

He was raised up for eminent usefulness in the church of God, and he did more to propagate Christianity than any other mere man who hath lived. He suffered much in his labors to advance and defend the religion of the blessed Saviour. To use his own language, he was "in deaths oft," while travelling round the world to proclaim the glad tidings of peace and salvation through a crucified Saviour. The followers of Christ generally, have not been called to such services as was the apostle, nor to endure such trials as he endured, and therefore it is not strange that their consolations should fall far below his. But remember, ye patient sufferers, that God is not unmindful of your labor of love, and that he is training you up to serve him better on earth, and to enjoy a brighter crown in heaven. God will not break the bruised reed, and the smoking flax he will not quench. He heareth every sigh, and every breathing of the contrite heart, and will give you grace to persevere to the end of your days, and to come off conquerors, yea, more than conquerors, through Him who hath loved you, and given himself to die for you.

We always find the most heavenly-minded Christians among those who have smarted most by the rod. To them, meditations have become familiar on that glorious state in which the redeemed will be brought into the immediate presence of God and the Lamb, and will unite with the spirits of just men made perfect, and with the holy angels, in everlasting songs of praise. However far they may fall short of rapturous enjoyments in religion while they see through a glass darkly, they discover a solidity and firmness in their exercises, which manifest that their light is shining with increasing brightness unto the perfect day.

I have now endeavored to collect and bring into view some of the principal evidences of sanctified afflictions. Can we say, in a review of our troubles, as the Psalmist

did, in a review of his, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes?" Our afflictions have certainly had some effect upon us; either in rendering our hearts tender, and our lives obedient, or in hardening our hearts, and occasioning us to become more obstinate and open in the practice of wickedness than ever. If the last be the effect, our case is alarming indeed, and we have much cause to fear, that to us is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

Let us recollect the marks or evidences of sanctified afflictions, which have now been brought into view, and impartially compare ourselves with them. These are plain rules of trial, and such as must commend themselves to our minds. If we have sought to regard them in our practice, when we have been in tribulation, we have found true peace, and can say with the Psalmist, that "it is good for us that we have been afflicted." Are there not some who can adopt this language, and find evidence that they are heirs of heaven, and can say, in some happy moments, with the Apostle, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us?" Rom. 8: 18. Let such maintain, at all times, a patient, and a devout, and a watchful, and a heavenly temper. Their days of mourning will soon be ended, and they will soon be admitted into the world of everlasting light and glory.

How awful is the state of those who have become hardened in all their afflictions! What can such expect, in the course which they are pursuing, but everlasting misery? "He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." Prov. 29: 1. What cause is there to fear that all the evils which they have felt in the present world, are but so many presages of wrath in the world to come! Let them be warned—let them be entreated, to search and try their ways, and turn unto the Lord!

No. 100.

THE

WEDDING GARMENT.

A WORTHY minister, early on Monday morning, called upon one of his hearers, who had been kept from the sanctuary by illness, and found him carefully reading the Bible. "Well, Thomas," said his kind pastor, "you seem determined to be a Berean Christian; which, by the way, is a peculiar privilege at all times, but especially in these days, when some are disposed to raise the works of fallible men to a level with the word of God." "A Berean Christian, sir," said Thomas, "is that a new sect which has arisen in these times?" "O no," replied his pastor, "it is as old as the days of the apostles: you may read about it in Acts, 17: 11, 12, 'These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honorable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.'"

THOMAS. Well, I think I can say it is my wish to be like these Bereans. I hope the word of the Lord becomes more and more precious to me.

MINISTER. Ah, Thomas, if all the professors of religion would read the Bible with prayerful attention, and with a constant desire to be taught by the Holy Spirit, we should see them more firmly established and rooted in the faith, and not driven about by every wind of doctrine. If we wish to be established Christians, we must be diligent read-

ers of the holy volume; then we shall "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ." What part have you been reading to-day?

THOMAS. One of the parables, sir.

MINISTER. Our Lord very often taught his followers by them. A parable, Thomas, is a picture, not for the eye, but for the mind. Which of the parables have you just read?

THOMAS. That of the marriage feast, in the 22d of St. Matthew's Gospel.

MINISTER. That is an encouraging representation of the rich provisions made for poor sinners in the Gospel, and the willingness of our heavenly Father that all should partake of them. It grieves one to think that any should make light of them.

THOMAS. True, sir: but how long I was guilty of that sin! How long I heard the Gospel faithfully preached, without giving up my heart to the Lord. It is a mercy that I was not cast out when at last I came to the Saviour.

MINISTER. Cast out, Thomas! There is no casting out of sinners who come to Christ for mercy. He has said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." John, 6: 37. Mark the words, Thomas, "I will in *no wise* cast out:" under no circumstances whatever. Those only are cast out at last who refuse to come to Christ, that they may have life.

THOMAS. Yes, sir; but there is one part of the parable that sometimes makes me tremble. The king said to his servants, "Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good; and the wedding was furnished with guests." Matt. 22: 9, 10. Now, sir, the bad and the good were all gathered together, and all

went to the wedding feast, and yet one was not welcome. O, I fear that I shall be that one!

MINISTER. Read the passage.

THOMAS. "When the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment. And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. 22: 11–13. You see, sir, there is casting away after all, though we may come to the feast.

MINISTER. Not if we come according to the invitation.

THOMAS. Ah, there is the point that has troubled me. Now, did not the poor man come according to the invitation? The servants were to go into the highways, and as many as they found they were to bid to the marriage. They found the poor man who was condemned by the king: he came when invited, and yet he was cast out.

MINISTER. Yes, but the reason is given, Thomas: he "had not on a wedding garment."

THOMAS. But there was nothing about the wedding garment in the invitation. The king only said, "Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage." You see, sir, there is nothing said about the wedding garment.

MINISTER. No, there is not; but supposing that when this man came to the palace, the servants of the king told him that, before he went in to the feast, he must put on a wedding garment which the king had provided, and when the servants offered the garment he refused to put it on, do you not think he would then be worthy of condemnation?

THOMAS. Surely he would. But was there one provided?

MINISTER. No doubt there was, for it was always the

custom to do so, a custom which remains to the present day in the families of rich and great men in the Eastern countries.

THOMAS. But there is nothing about it in the parable.

MINISTER. No, Thomas. As I told you, a parable is to the mind what a picture is to the eye: it shows forth a great truth. In a picture, there is some leading object to which the painter wishes to direct our attention; so it is in a parable. Our Lord, in the parable of the marriage feast, referred to a custom which existed in his days, and which is still continued. It was well known to his hearers; and therefore it was not necessary that all the particulars of the custom should be mentioned in the parable. The great truth which Christ taught was, that *all* were welcome to the Gospel feast who came in the appointed way.

THOMAS. But what, sir, was the meaning of this wedding garment?

MINISTER. I will explain the matter. A gentleman, who died not long since, spent several years in Palestine, which is sometimes called the Holy Land, the country in which the prophets, our Lord, his evangelists, and the apostles lived. He once told his friends the following fact: "I was very anxious to witness an Eastern wedding. It is still celebrated at midnight, as described in the parable of the ten virgins, in the 25th of Matthew. To my great joy, a rich man sent me an invitation to be present at his daughter's marriage. I thought I would pay my host all possible respect, and therefore I determined to go to the feast in the full dress of an English gentleman. On my way to the place where the wedding was to be celebrated, I met a friend, who inquired whither I was going? I told him, to the wedding feast. 'But you cannot go as you are; you have not on the wedding garment.' 'The wedding garment?' I replied—'the wedding garment? I have no wedding garment to put on.' My friend answered, 'Yes,

you have: if you go back to your house and inquire of your servant, you will find that when the invitation was sent you, a wedding garment was sent at the same time. Go back and see. You cannot be admitted to the marriage feast without it.' On going back, I found a beautiful robe had been sent for me to put on. I then went, and received a hearty welcome; but had I gone without it, the master of the house would have been offended, and I should have been cast out." Now, Thomas, do you understand why the king cast out the man from the feast?

THOMAS. I think I do: it was not because no wedding garment was provided, but because the man refused to put it on after it was provided.

MINISTER. Yes, that was the case; and do you not now see the guilt of the man, and the justice of the king? The king had not only given the invitation, but had provided the garment. So it is in the provisions of grace. God has not only invited us to that rich marriage feast, which he has spread in heaven for "The Bride, the Lamb's wife," as the church is called; but has also sent, with the invitation, the wedding garment, which he requires every guest to wear. *That garment is the Righteousness of Christ*, wrought out, perfected, and presented at the same time with the invitation of the Gospel; and the first thing required of every one, to whom it is thus sent, is to put it on by faith. You see, therefore, the justice of the condemnation, which will fall on every one among the professed disciples of Christ, who shall finally be found not to have on the ready and the offered wedding garment. There are three solemn lessons which we may learn from this parable.

1. Sinners *will not be cast out because there was no provision made for their salvation.* The Gospel is compared to a marriage feast: all are invited, and all are welcome to come to God, that they may find mercy. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believ-

eth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3: 16. The invitations of the Gospel, like those to the marriage feast, are addressed to all who will listen to them. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22: 17. There is a Redeemer, "who is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." Heb. 7: 25. If the sinner refuse to come, he will be lost forever; not because there was no way of salvation, but because he refused to accept the free and merciful offers of the Gospel.

2. Sinners must come to God *in the way which he has appointed.* "I am the way, the truth, and the life," John, 14: 6, are our Saviour's blessed words. The poor man in the parable was welcome to the feast, provided he had put on the wedding garment. Surely it was his duty and privilege to do this. The sinner never can appear before God in his own righteousness. He has none. "Our righteousnesses," the prophet says, "are as filthy rags." Isa. 64: 6. We are altogether defiled by sin: "There is none righteous, no, not one." Rom. 3: 10. How then can a sinner appear before God, and unite in the praises of the Redeemer in heaven? He must put on the wedding garment, even the robe of the Saviour's righteousness. Now, mark what the Scripture says: "When we were yet without strength," or help, "Christ died for the ungodly." Rom. 5: 6. He was made "sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 5: 21. He has been "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness." 1 Cor. 1: 30. The Bible tells us that our blessed Redeemer, by his own perfect righteousness, even his obedience unto death, satisfied the justice of God for the sinner: having done this, the sinner must come to Christ, believe on him, and trust in his merits as the only ground of his acceptance with God. He is pardoned for what Christ has done for him, and he is accounted righteous for Christ's

sake, who is called "The Lord our righteousness." Jer. 23 : 6. Now, when the sinner thus comes to God, he puts on the righteousness the Saviour has obtained for him ; and this is the only way in which he can be saved. If the sinner then should be lost, it will not be because there was no way of salvation, but because he refused to come to Christ in the appointed way. He will not put on the wedding garment, and will not his condemnation be just ?

3. When the sinner stands at the judgment seat to receive his final and eternal condemnation, he will be like the man in the parable—*speechless ;* that is, he will not have one word to say against the righteous judgment of God. He will then find that he was lost, not because there was no Saviour provided, but because he rejected that Saviour. He would not put on the wedding garment. You see, Thomas, the parable of the marriage feast is full of comfort to all who come to Christ in the right way ; but full of awful warning to those who reject his righteousness, even the wedding garment in which alone we can find acceptance before God. This is the fatal sin that will destroy thousands.

THOMAS. Yes, sir, I desire to feel more than ever I did, that the sinner will only have himself to blame for the eternal loss of his soul.

MINISTER. It will be so, Thomas. God has provided a ransom, and invites the sinner to come and receive it. He has promised to give the Holy Spirit in answer to prayer. Every lost soul will see the truth of that scripture, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." John 3 : 19. How awful will be the reflection of the sinner when he is in hell, "I am lost, eternally lost, not because there was no Saviour provided for sinners, but because I wilfully rejected that Saviour, and therefore died without pardon !" May the grace of God prevent us

from rejecting the Saviour; may the Holy Spirit apply his salvation to our hearts; and may we have greater pleasure than ever in singing our favorite hymn:

Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds, in these array'd,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

When from the dust of death I rise,
To claim my mansion in the skies;
E'en then shall this be all my plea,
Jesus hath liv'd and died for me.

Bold shall I stand in that great day;
For who aught to my charge shall lay,
While, through thy blood, absolv'd I am
From sin's tremendous curse and shame.

Thus Abraham, the friend of God,
Thus all the armies bought with blood,
Saviour of sinners, thee proclaim;
Sinners, of whom the chief I am.

This spotless robe the same appears
When ruin'd nature sinks in years;
No age can change its glorious hue:
The robe of Christ is ever new.

O let the dead now hear thy voice!
Bid, Lord, thy banish'd ones rejoice;
Their beauty this, their glorious dress,
JESUS, THE LORD, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Wesley.

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No. 101.

THE

TRUE BELIEVER BOUNTIFUL.

Ye disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, your Saviour has set up a church in this world, has promised that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and that it shall one day embrace all nations; and calls upon you to consecrate your property to the diffusion of that Gospel, by which he brings men into his kingdom, and makes them happy. Will you hear me, while I offer a few arguments to induce you to obey him in this reasonable requisition? I will enter upon the point without detaining you a moment, and when I have done, you must act as you think proper.

The *first* argument is, that "the *earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof,*" *and hence he has a right to make this draft upon you.* If I fail of establishing this point, you may lay down the book, and not read another line. You acknowledge God as the Creator of all things. Here I found his claim: it is prior to all others. He who built all worlds, and peopled them, and gave that people all their good things, may make a demand upon them, to any amount, with the certainty that it cannot be protested. His are all the "beasts of the forest," "and the cattle upon a thousand hills." The same is true of your silver, your merchandise,

your children, your servants, and all you have. If not, then name the good thing that you can be sure will be yours to-morrow. Begin, if you please, at the bottom of the catalogue of your comforts, and ascend through the whole series, to the wife of your bosom, your health, and your life, and tell me which of the whole will be yours to-morrow. Dare you name nothing? Then whosesoever they are, they surely are not yours. For he who has nothing that he can hold a day, has nothing but what is borrowed. And if the good things you possess are not yours, they are the Lord's; or whose are they? And what was the Lord's at first, because he made it, he has carefully watched over and preserved. Not merely could we have *had* nothing, if God had not made it; but we could have *kept* nothing, if God had not preserved it.

There is no kind of independence about us; we should have been beggars if God had not cared for us. There was an eye that watched more narrowly than we did or could, or our wealth had long since taken to itself wings, and had flown away. It was the blessed God that watered our fields, and gave success to our commerce, and health to our children; that guarded our house from fire, and our lives from danger; else we should have been beggars, or should, years ago, have perished. How many, once as wealthy as you, are now poor; or as healthy as you, are now in the grave; had a home as you have, but it burned down; had children, as perhaps you have, but the cold blast came over them, and they died. And was it not the kindness of God that saved to you what you have? May he not then claim as much of your wealth as he pleases?

But I am not through the argument. God has never *alienated* his rights. He has suffered Satan to be styled

the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air; but *he* owns nothing. The territories that he promised the Lord Jesus, if he would fall down and worship him, were not a foot of them his. And though men are permitted to hold under God certain rights, and which they sometimes term unalienable, still God never has renounced his right to dispose at pleasure of all that we term ours, and he never will. In a moment, if he pleases, day or night, he puts us out of our possessions, and the places that knew us, know us no more for ever. Thus the voluptuary in the Gospel, just when about to pull down his barns and build greater, that he might have room to deposit his good things, and when about to say to his soul, "thou hast good things laid up for many years," heard from heaven the unwelcome tidings, "this night thy soul shall be required of thee." In a few hours more his life-lease would be out, when all he had must revert to its original and rightful owner.

Hence, we can serve God only with what is his already; what he has never alienated. "Of thine own, we give thee." Now, that which God has put into our hands, and the right to which he has never relinquished, we may not, without the charge of fraud, appropriate otherwise than as he shall command us.

But I have not done. God has often *asserted* his claim to what we term ours. This he does by his *mercies*. Every shower he sends, and every sun that rises, witnesses a God riding upon the heavens and making the clouds his chariot, that he may pay a friendly visit to his own territories, and distil blessings upon the fields, whose fee, and all whose fruits are his; and every breeze, and every dew that falls, but set forth their morning and their evening claim to

their Master's right. Thus "day unto day uttereth speech" of him, and "night unto night" repeats again and again the story of his kindness to his own creations, and his care of his own territory. When was any one thus careful for another's interest, and thus intent upon rendering fertile a soil whose increase he might neither appropriate to himself nor call his own? And when he heals our sicknesses, and holds us back from the grave, and purifies our atmosphere with his lightnings, and bids the autumnal frosts to cure the fevers and the plagues of our cities, of whom does he take all this care, but of his children and his servants? and when he heals the broken bone and restores the weary and the faint, has he no claim upon the existence he prolongs, and the health and life he gives? and when he feeds us daily at his table, and regales us at his fountains, and rests us upon the works he built, and furnishes the eye with light, and gladdens every sense with its appropriate delights, does he not assert his claim to be served and honored by the beings he thus indefatigably protects, and feeds, and heals, and nourishes? Is there a star that twinkles in the firmament, or a moon that lights up night, or a bow that spreads its beauties on the cloud, and God is not seen in them, giving light and promise to the subjects of his own kingdom? Is there a flower of May, or a dew-drop of morning, or a lineament in the human face, in which God is not seen pencilling out beauties upon his own works? And who will deny that God has a paramount claim to a world where he expends so much of his wisdom and his care? Where is the individual who will not acknowledge the rights of God?

And he asserts his claim again in the *severities* of his providence. Once he claimed the whole world, and, by a

sudden and fearful dispensation, displaced every tenant that had ever occupied its soil, providing afterwards, timely and amply, for the single family he loved, and whom by covenant he had adopted as his own. And none will say that God went without his own dominions, to lay a world waste that was the property of *another*. When he burned the cities of the plain, he only asserted, though loudly and fearfully, his rights; and pressed home to the bosom and the conscience, of foe and friend, his claim to be served and honored, in every valley that he had made fertile, and by every people whom his kindness had made prosperous.

In the ruin of all the ancient monarchies, God is seen in the attitude of asserting his claim to the kingdoms of men, as sections of his own empire, to which he will send other rulers, and other subjects, whenever he shall please. The desolating pestilences by which he has dispeopled towns and cities, and the thousand nameless sweeps of death written in our gloomy history, had all their commissions from heaven, to take back the life, and health, and comforts he had loaned to men. There was one kingdom we read of, whose whole population went seventy years into bondage, because their land had not been allowed to keep its Sabbaths, and they had not paid their tithes, and emancipated their servants at the appointed jubilee.

The storms that have wrecked our merchandise, and the fires that have devoured our cities, and all the *misnamed* casualties that have ruined our fortunes, have been so many claims put in, by the rightful owner of all things, to what we had appropriated too exclusively to our own use. And the occurrences of every day are of the same character.

I know this is not the world of retribution, and that

"no man knoweth either good or evil, by any thing that is done under the sun;" but let us not deny, that God is "known by the judgment that he executeth." Will he not, by repeated demands, keep men in mind that they cultivate his territory, and feed on his bounty, and are happy under his auspices? In thus asserting his claim to be served with the talents that he loans, he shows that one unchangeable law of his kingdom is, that he never alienates what was once his own.

I shall not offend the good man, when I claim, that this has been a *disastrous*, because a *disobedient* world. Perhaps the aggregate of property lost by the various calamities that God has sent upon this world, would have exactly met the claims he had upon its charity. Had that wealth been expended as he directed, it would have made the world wise and happy. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." We read again, "There is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."

It is impossible to say how much more prosperous this world might have been, if men had expended their wealth as God would have them; how much more frequently the showers had fallen, or more genial our sun, or more gentle our breezes, or mild our winters, or fertile our soil, or healthful our population, if we had been a better people, and had served the Lord with our substance. His promise must have failed, or he would have "filled our barns with plenty," and caused our "presses to burst out with new wine."

As the churches shall wake to their duty, and give the world the Gospel, I hope, and if infidelity scoffs, still I will hope, that much of the curse will be removed from this ill-fated world, and God kindly "stay his rough wind, in the day of his east wind." How many of its plagues will be cured, its wars prevented, its heaths made fertile, and its earthquakes stilled; and what the amount of blessings bestowed upon this world, when it shall become more loyal and more benevolent, none but God can know. I cannot believe, that when we shall do as he bids us, he will so often rebuke us. When we cease to waste his goods, he will allow us to continue longer in the stewardship; when we shall be faithful in the few things, he will make us rulers over many things.

If you will now consider me as having established the divine claim to you, and all that you have, I will proceed to offer the *second* argument; which is, that Christians, who have the means, should contribute to disseminate the Gospel, *because they are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.* They belong to that kingdom which the Gospel was intended to establish. This fact is quite enough to give the cause I plead a strong hold upon every pious heart. Ye disciples of the Lord Jesus, read once more the charter of your hopes; and while it warms your heart, tell me if you have done half your duty. "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Then it seems God and his people have but one interest. Hence, when he commands them to spread the Gospel, he but bids them buy themselves blessings, bids them foster their own interest, and make their own kingdom happy. The Christian

has by his own act identified his whole interest with that of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. If God is honored, he is happy; and God is honored in the salvation of sinners, and in the joy of his people. Hence, God can command his people to do nothing but that which will bless themselves.

Now, when did you know of a king's son who would not joyfully expend his father's treasures to enlarge, and strengthen, and beautify the kingdom to which he was heir? He thus polishes his own crown, and blesses his own future reign. What believer has not the same interest that God has, in lengthening the cords and strengthening the stakes of Zion! He is one of the little flock, to whom it is his Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom. He is to be a king and a priest to God and the Lamb for ever; and has he still an interest distinct from his heavenly Father? If not, he will hold all he has at the control of God. He will need only to know his duty, and will perform it most cheerfully.

The *third* reason why Christians, who have the means, should contribute to disseminate the Gospel, is, that *they are merciful, as their Father in heaven is merciful.* Over that mass of misery which the apostasy has produced, their pious hearts have long bled in sympathy. And their charity is not of that kind that it can content itself with saying, "Be ye warmed, and be ye filled." They have read, and have strongly felt, that cutting interrogation of the apostle, "Whosoever hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" And there is no man so needy as he who has not the bread of life. The *good man* would render all men happy. His charity is

warm, like that which beats in the heart of the Son of God; and to do his duty is his meat and his drink. This makes him like his Master; and to this he aspires. He cannot hope to rejoice eternally in the achievements of redemption, unless, moved by the same pity for the miserable that *he* felt, he is prepared to come up promptly, and offer the Saviour any service he requires.

Oh, it fills me with shame, when I must goad up my own heart, or must urge my Christian brother to be kind; for it is acknowledged, that we owe all we have, and all we hope for, to the loving-kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our reprieve from hell, we owe to his mercy; and the food we eat, and the raiment we put on, and the friends who succor us, and the tenement we dwell in, and the bed we rest on. He is the Saviour of all men; ah, and more yet *we* owe him, for he is especially the Saviour of them that believe. It is through him we have that pardon we speak of, that sanctification which we hope is begun, that adoption which placed us in his family, that peace of God which passeth all understanding, and that hope which we have cast within the veil. We had never discovered that we were sinners, but for his loving-kindness; nor had mourned for sin, had the discovery been made; nor had taken any hold on the atonement; nor had looked complacently upon the attributes of God; but had lived and died aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise; nor had joined hereafter the redeemed of the Lord, or raised to his honor one anthem of praise. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." And says an apostle, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich,

yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." And can it still be true, and must it be told in Gath, and published in the streets of Askelon, that any of his people will not diminish their wealth a little for him who bought all their riches with his poverty? Should there chance to be a covetous Christian among all the disciples of the Lord Jesus that will not spend his money to save men from hell, pray let his history be a secret, let him lodge in some wilderness, where his example may not cast a reproach upon his Master and his brethren; and let him find a grave in some dark glen, and sleep in solitude, and rise alone, and come alone to the judgment. Still, when that brother shall die, and be reckoned with, it must remain a doubt whether, having showed no mercy, he must not expect judgment without mercy.

I appeal then, ye disciples of Jesus Christ, to the kindness of your hearts, when I ask you to contribute of your wealth to render the world happy. Would you not cure some of the plagues that sin has generated, and that have so long preyed upon the blessedness of man? Would you not quench the funeral pile, and save the young and beautiful, but infatuated widow, that she may nurse her imploring infant, and live to rear it up to life? Would you not free one half of the human family, the female sex, from that servitude to which paganism has subjected them? Would you not snatch ten thousand infants from the altars of devils, where they now lie, bound and weeping, waiting till you speak a word of mercy for them? Would you not teach the vast herd of idolaters, that there is a kinder, and more merciful God, than those they worship? Would you not break in upon the delusions of the false prophet, and tell his misguided followers, that you have read of a holier heav-

en than they hope for? Would you not file off the chains that have been fastened, so many centuries, upon poor afflicted Africa? Would you not stay the progress of war, and save the thousands that are marching, warm and weary, towards the field of death? Oh, would you not, were it possible, bring back this base world to its home and its Maker? Have you then a purse, into which God may not thrust his hand, and take thence what he has there deposited, with a view to make this wretched world happy?

Bear with me, ye followers of the Lamb, a little longer, and I will say that you have *covenanted to be workers together with God* in achieving the purposes of redemption, and must now employ your energies to widen the boundaries of his holy empire, or forfeit your promise. It was in you a voluntary compact; and you pledged in that hour your prayers, your influence, your farm, your merchandise, your purse, your children, and all that you have. And Heaven has recorded that vow, to be brought up against you, if it be violated, in the day of retribution. It was wholly at your option, whether you would enter into that sweeping covenant, whether you would swear; but you have entered, you have sworn, and cannot go back. You then relinquished for ever your personal rights, and have had, ever since, but a community of interest with God and his people. Now, God is employed in doing good, and his people too, if they are like him. How, then, will it correspond with your oath, to stand aloof from the calls of the church—and disregard the command of God—and let the waste places lie desolate—and let the heathen die in their pollution—and let the captives perish in their chains—and let almost the whole of that territory, purchased with the

blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, lie under the usurped dominion of the prince of hell—and let a whole condemned world go to the judgment, with all this blood upon it, unsanctified? Oh, how will your broken vows rise and haunt you, in that day when the wealth you have saved shall be weighed in the balance with the souls it might have been the instrument of redeeming!

Who would venture upon the experiment of being convicted of covenant-breaking before a congregated world? of having embezzled the wealth God created purposely for the use of his church? of having squandered upon his person, or his children—perhaps to their ruin—what might have been used in turning the fertilizing stream of the gospel into some parched territory, where, ever since the apostasy, there has been only desolation, and famine, and pestilence? Oh, who, for all the gold that has ever been counted, would go to the altar of God, and there swear that he would renounce the pomp and vanities of the world, and then go and stand impeached, before angels and devils, at the judgment-seat, of having loved the world more than God, more than the souls of men, more than the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ?

I offer you one reason more. You have been sanctified, as you hope, through the truth; and hence have *some experience of the value* of that gospel which we urge you to promulgate. Once you were ignorant of God, and were unhappy. You were in somewhat the same forlorn condition with those whose cause I plead; you had forsaken God, the fountain of living water, and had hewn out to yourselves broken cisterns, that could hold no water. And you remember that dark period. Your mind travelled from object to object, through all the round of created good, and,

in search of blessedness, found no end, in wandering mazes lost.

And there is a world of intelligent, immortal beings, seen panting and weary in the same fruitless chase. It was the blessed gospel that arrested you, and saved you. Your heedless steps it guided; your dark mind it enlightened; your erring conscience it rectified; your insensibility it aroused; your hard heart it softened; your selfishness it expanded; your pride it humbled; your wayward course it changed; your covenant with death, and your agreement with hell, it disannulled. And here you stand, redeemed, regenerated, your whole character changed, and your final destiny altered, through the influence of the blessed gospel. The curse is removed; you are a child of God, and an heir of glory, and shall one day see the King in his beauty: *and the gospel has done it.* It has given you peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, a firm hope of heaven, and the soul-reviving assurance that all things shall work together for your good, till you rise to be where Christ is, behold his beauty, and rejoice in his love for ever.

Now, the question is, whether you will contribute of your wealth, to save those who are perishing, as you so lately were. I now plead with you by all that religion has been worth to you, by all the joys it has brought you, by all the woes it has cured, by all the hopes it has raised, and by all the transformation it has wrought in your character and your condition. For what price would you return into the darkened, and dreary, and hopeless condition in which the gospel found you? For what would you barter away all the delightful prospects that open before you, and calculate on no more precious sacramental seasons; no more communion of saints; no more delightful hours in

your closet; nor Pisgah views of the field of promise; nor fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ? At no price would you part with these. Then how great are the blessings which you have it in your power to confer on those who are perishing for lack of vision.

May we be permitted to learn what estimate you put upon religion by the pains you take to communicate its joys to others? This is the only rule God has given us. Weighed in this balance, how will you appear in the sight of God? Have you foregone the gratification of your taste, that you might send salvation to some destitute territory of this ruined world? Have you denied yourself any article of luxury, rode in a less splendid carriage, or reclined upon a humbler couch, or mounted a plainer staircase, or seated yourself at a less costly table, or spent an hour more at business, that you might have at command the means of doing good, of enlightening the benighted or reclaiming the vicious, or of bringing to hope and to heaven the wayward and the lost? Or was no such economy necessary? Then, I ask, Have you allowed God and his kingdom to put in their claim along with yours? When you bought a luxury, did you buy a Bible for the poor? When you enlarged and beautified your habitation, and added another house or another field to your possessions, did you enlarge your annual subscription to the benevolent institutions of the age? Did you, when you had paid your thousands for some conveniences, pay a tithe of that sum to enlarge, and beautify, and strengthen the kingdom of your Master? Did you feel none the less able and the more obligated to do good, because God allowed you to make large appropriations for your own comfort? The divine precept is, and it binds every Christian conscience, "Do good to all men as you have opportunity,

but especially to those who are of the household of faith;" and in their obedience to this precept, they show exactly the price they put upon piety. Dear as a gospel temper, and a gospel hope, and a gospel heaven are to us, proportionably high will rise our zeal to generate that temper and that hope in every bosom, and prepare for that heaven a whole world of benighted and perishing sinners. And as our zeal is, such will be the promptitude with which we shall bestow our substance to rescue the lost from the perdition that awaits them.

Do you say that they can purchase the privileges of the gospel as you have? No, they will not. They know not their value; and will die in their sins, ere they will give a shilling for the light of the gospel. Not the whole of India, if it would save them all from hell, would be willing to support a single missionary.

If we persuade them to let our missionaries live in their territories, and to refrain from their blood, we shall rejoice. If they will allow their children to read the Bible, when we have taught them, and supported them while they were taught, we shall be happy. If they will hear us when we have come on our knees to them, and will be entreated when we have worn out our health, and even life, for them, it will be all we can expect. But, "how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall he preach except he be sent?" and how can he be sent, unless the wealthy will feed him and clothe him? And if missionaries can be found, who will encounter a sultry clime, and die pleading with men to be willing to live for ever, need we plead long with wealthy believers to induce them to sustain these missionaries? What then will the world think of us, who march up so promptly in every enterprise dear to their hearts?

Will God send them the gospel by miracle? No, he once did thus send it to the lost, blessed be his name! but he now commands us to send it to those who are perishing for lack of vision. We know our duty, and God will require it of us. Can we meet the heathen in the judgment, if we have done nothing to promote their salvation?

I will plead no longer. But let me tell you, in parting, that when you shall see the world on fire, your wealth all melting down, and those who have perished through your neglect calling upon the "rocks and mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb," and shall know that you might have been instrumental in saving them, there will be strong sensations. If you are saved yourself, and you cannot be, if you remain indifferent to the salvation of others, you will wish a place to weep over your past neglects, before you begin your everlasting song; and if lost yourself, then indeed there will be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

Note.—A premium of fifty dollars, proposed by a generous individual, was awarded to the author of this Tract.

No. 102.

PAY-NIGHT.

A DIALOGUE ON SATURDAY EVENING.

William. Come, Robert, let's call over across the common, and take a glass of grog. We have done a good week's work, and wages are fair now.

Robert. No, I am bound for home; and as for the glass of grog, it's what does all the mischief. Think of poor Sam's wife and children. A better workman never entered the shop; but he must have his grog, and last week we laid the poor fellow in his grave.

Wm. Yes, yes; but there's no harm in taking a little to refresh one's spirits after a hard day's work. It's only just past nine, and we can lie an hour longer in the morning.

Rob. Ah, it's this taking a little to refresh one's spirits that leads on to a little more, and then a little more, till we

are ruined. Just take none at all, and you are safe. Poor Sam used to take a little, but he took it oftener and oftener, till he had an appetite like a horse-leech. He drank up all his wages, and you see how the matter ended. For my part, I wish we were paid some other night besides Saturday, and a little earlier too. It is more than one can do, at this late hour, to get home and be ready for Sunday; besides, many of our shopmates squander a great part of their week's wages before the day is over.

Wm. "Ready for Sunday!" I thought Sunday was intended as a day of rest and recreation. I was just going to ask you to join a party, and take a sail with us to-morrow; but I suppose, from what you say about Sunday, that it's of no use to ask you.

Rob. To be sure I should not like to violate and profane the Lord's day.

Wm. Violate and profane the Lord's day! What! to take a little innocent recreation after slaving hard all the week, do you call this violating and profaning the Lord's day?

Rob. I don't know how any one can call it otherwise.

Wm. I should like to hear what mighty reason you can give, why a man should not take a little pleasure, only because it happens to be on Sunday.

Rob. Well, then, you must know, first of all, that the Sabbath was intended by the Almighty to be a day of rest and cessation from labor. We read that "God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it; because that in it he had rested from all his work." Now what you propose as recreation, is harder than any of our work; and for my part, I have no notion of volunteering to row a boat for hours together, like a galley slave, for the sake of rest and recreation, after working hard all the week. It was but yesterday that I read in the paper of two parties who were launched into eternity while taking their pleasure on the water on Sunday. A bad preparation surely for such a change. Besides, you know it is not more than three years ago when a party of fifteen

young men and women were drowned, and the minister of our town preached a most affecting discourse on the evil and danger of Sabbath-breaking. He spoke in such a manner as made the tear trickle down from every eye; and the sighs and sobs of the people sometimes almost stopped him in his sermon. I shall not forget it as long as I live. And then, such sport cannot be had without money; and a man spends as much in this way on a Sunday, as would keep his family half the week; so he comes home at night with weary bones, a guilty conscience, and an empty pocket into the bargain.

Wm. Well, I see 'tis of no use arguing with you. I shall go and see if they have spoken for the boat, and got all things ready; for we mean to start early in the morning.

Rob. Nay, but stay a minute or two longer, shopmate, for I have another reason stronger than all the rest put together; and that is, you have the commandments of God against you. He has said, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God:" you may read more of it in Exodus, chap. 20. And in another place Jehovah speaks thus: "Ye shall keep my Sabbath, for it is holy unto you; every one that defileth it shall be put to death." And this law was actually put in force among the Israelites. While they were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day; "and the Lord said unto Moses, The man shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp; and all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died." Num. 15:32–16. Well might the Apostle say, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Now as to the manner of keeping the Sabbath, I will just mention one text of Scripture more; and this, as well as all the rest, is point blank against you: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a

delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing *thine own ways*, nor finding *thine own pleasures*, nor speaking *thine own words*, then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob, thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isa. 58 : 13, 14. Now, if these reasons are not enough to satisfy you, I will add another.

Wm. Another! no, no; I don't want any more reasons. But give over this sort of preaching, and say you will go. I'll warrant you it will be a fine day, and we shall enjoy it well.

Rob. No, William, I cannot go with you, for sure I am there is no happiness where the blessing of God is not; much less is happiness to be found in the way of transgression; for the Bible says, "The way of transgressors is hard." But as I dare not spend the Sabbath in your way, let me invite you to come and enjoy it with me: I will say, as Moses of old, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good; and it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be that what goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee."

Wm. I begin to think, indeed I have thought so ever since my good old mother died, that it is not quite right to neglect church on Sunday; and I must honestly tell you, I have, more than once or twice, had some stings of conscience, when, in spite of all my endeavors to forget it, I have thought upon the foolish manner in which I have spent the past day; and then, on Monday morning, I feel as if every thing was wrong about me. I come to work with a heavy heart, while you appear as blithe as a lark, and as happy as a prince. Tell me, Robert, how is it you pass your Sundays?

Rob. I'll do that with pleasure; and if you can produce but half as many good reasons against my way of spending the Sabbath, as I have against yours, then I'll say no more.

Well, then, you must know, that when Saturday evening comes——

Wm. Saturday evening!—Why, shopmate, I asked you how you employed the Sunday, and not what you do on Saturday. Does your Sunday begin on Saturday? This is making a long Sunday of it, indeed.

Rob. I always consider Saturday evening as the preparation for the Sabbath; and as to the length of it, it always flies too fast for me—

"The gladness of that happy day,
"My soul would wish it long to stay."

Wm. Well, then, on Saturday evening—what then?

Rob. Why, then my wife and little ones are all as busy as if they were getting ready to go to court the next morning: indeed, I always count the Sabbath as the grand court-day of the King of kings; for, as the hymn says—

"The King himself comes near,
"And feasts his saints to-day;
"Here we may sit and see him here,
"And love, and praise, and pray."

The children's play-things are all put away—shoes all cleaned, their clothes all aired and laid ready for the morning, house made tidy, and my wife waiting till I come home with my wages; and I must be going soon, else she will begin to think something has happened.

Wm. Yes; I always thought your wife one of a thousand. I wish every other man's wife was as good as she is; however, I will not complain.

Rob. Well, then, as I said, all things being ready on Saturday night, we offer up our praises to Almighty God for the mercies of the past week, and pray that, with the light of the coming day, the light of his countenance may shine upon our souls—

"Safely through another week,
"God has brought us on our way;
"Let us now a blessing seek
"On th' approaching Sabbath day—
"Day of all the week the best,
"Emblem of eternal rest."

Then we go to bed, rest our weary limbs, and always welcome the opening of another Sabbath day.

Wm. Why, this is making the most of a good thing; but don't you lie an hour or two longer in the morning, after the labor of the week?

Rob. As to that, I'll tell you. I rise at my usual hour, read the Bible alone, and pray to the Lord that we may "begin, continue, and end" the sacred day in the fear of God.

Wm. I am afraid you have got too much religion for me; I shall not much like your way. I always thought if I went to church once on a Sunday, I did my duty quite well enough.

Rob. Too much religion! That is impossible, if a man's heart is right. If he has tasted that the Lord is gracious, he will be coming to him; and as a new-born babe, "desire the sincere milk of the word, that he may grow thereby," as the Apostle Peter speaks. Too much religion! Why, religion is happiness; and you never yet knew any one have too much happiness.

Wm. Well, after the morning prayer and reading the Bible, what then?

Rob. Why, then I come down, and find the children all clean, wife ready with the breakfast; and as soon as that is over, we prepare for family worship, which we begin with a hymn; the little ones all join, I set the tune, and my Sarah has got a pretty voice. We often begin the Sabbath with—

"Welcome, sweet day of rest,
"That saw the Lord arise,
"Welcome to this reviving breast,
"And these rejoicing eyes."

Then we all kneel down and pray for a Sabbath-day's blessing, never forgetting to commend our minister to the grace of God; that he may be aided by the Holy Spirit to speak a word in season to him that is weary.

Wm. I should think you have had praying and singing enough for one day. I should be prayed and sung to death with so much religion.

Rob. Enough! William; the best of it is not yet begun. There is the public worship of the sanctuary; and, when the hour arrives, my heart is ready to cry out with David, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go unto the house of the Lord. How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God! A day in thy courts is better than a thousand." It would do your heart good to see our good minister; he looks like a man that is pleading with God on behalf of his people. He looks round upon the congregation with so much affection, that you would think we were all his own children. He is always upon the one grand subject, as he calls it—*Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* This was his first text when he first came to us: "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." 1 Cor. 2:2. And he has kept good his determination ever since.

Wm. I think I should not much like your minister. According to your account, he is always harping upon one string.

Rob. Harping upon one string! Yes, truly; but it is a string on which he plays a thousand delightful tunes. Christ and him crucified! Why, William, this is the music of heaven, and no wonder it should gladden the hearts of sinners upon earth. I could listen to it for ever. Let me tell you, William, you and I are sinners, and we stand in need of a Savior; we are great sinners, and we need a great Savior: now, just such a Savior is Jesus Christ, as St. Paul says—"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,

of whom I am chief." 1 Tim. 1 : 15. It is the blood of Christ that takes away our sins; it is the righteousness of Christ that justifies us before God; it is the Spirit of Christ that makes us holy; it is the consolation of Christ that gives comfort in affliction; it is the grace of Christ that supports us when we come to die; it is the smile of Christ that gives boldness in the day of judgment; and it is the presence of Christ that makes heaven the blessed place it is. In short, "Christ is all and in all," as the Apostle has it in another place.

Wm. I confess I never heard so much about Christ before. I always thought that if a man did as well as he could, he need not concern himself so much about Christ and religion.

Rob. I thought so once, until I heard our good minister preach from this text, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." Gal. 3 : 10. I then found myself to be a guilty condemned sinner; and saw there was salvation only through the atoning blood of Christ. I cried to him for mercy; and he says, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out."

Wm. I think I should like to hear your minister preach; but surely you don't think there can be any harm in taking a walk into the fields in the afternoon, after going to church in the morning.

Rob. Why as to that—Now suppose you come to the shop on Monday morning, and work till twelve o'clock, and then go off and lounge about the rest of the day—would this be doing your duty to our employer? Would you not justly fall short in your reckoning when Saturday night came? So our blessed Lord says, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." Matt. 6 : 24.

Now I love my Divine Master, and never think I can do enough for him. I love his service also; it is "perfect freedom."

Wm. Well, I think I should like to spend a Sunday with you, but I can't to-morrow; the party is all made up except *you;* and as you won't go, we must either get somebody else, or go as we are.

Rob. My dear fellow, let me persuade you not to go; you seem to be somewhat convinced of the evil of Sabbath-breaking, and I am sure you will not be happy. Your conscience has often warned and checked you; and you will be sinning against light, and against this friendly caution. What if God should take you away with a stroke; you have no security against it, and especially in the way of disobedience; for "he that, being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." Prov. 29 : 1.

Wm. Why, you seem to have all the argument on your side. Well, if I thought they would not laugh at me, and call me a Methodist, I would give it up, and go along with you.

Rob. Laugh at you, and call you a Methodist! Why let them laugh, and let them call. So the gay pleasure-takers might have laughed at Noah while he was preparing the ark; but the flood came and drowned them all; and their laughter was turned into bitter crying, when they found themselves shut out. This may have been the case, also, with the scoffers that dwelt in guilty Sodom; but the same day that Lot left the place, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

Wm. Well, I'll consider of it.

Rob. I hope you will, and may the Holy Spirit incline you to determine on the side of Christ and your immortal soul; this is true wisdom; and you will find her ways "are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are paths of peace." But I must be going; I have told you but half the

delightful work of the Sabbath-day; come, and prove the rest. I will only just say, the other half of the day becomes sweeter and sweeter, as one enters into the spirit of it; and I sometimes think, if there is so much comfort in the worship of God on earth, then what must heaven be!

"O the delights, the heavenly joys,
"The transports of the place,
"Where Jesus sheds the brightest beams
"Of his o'erflowing grace!"

Now, compare your way of spending the Sabbath with mine, and let any man of common sense be the judge, and I'll venture to say he will give it in my favor. You come home, half worn out with recreation, as you call it—money all spent—wife perhaps out of humor—the children cross and sleepy—and when you lie down at night, you cannot ask God's blessing on the past day, but are obliged to skulk to bed like a thief that is afraid of being taken before his judge. But in my way of spending the Sabbath, our bodies are rested from the toils of the past week, our spirits are refreshed by the blessing of God; it makes rich, and adds no sorrow therewith; and we can lie down at night with a cheerful heart, expressing our gratitude to our Heavenly Father in devout adoration and songs of praise.

"Come, bless the Lord, whose love assigns
"So sweet a rest to wearied minds;
"Provides an antepast of heaven,
"And gives this day the food of seven.

"O that our thoughts and thanks may rise
"As grateful incense to the skies;
"And draw from heaven that sweet repose,
"Which none, but he that feels it, knows.

"This heavenly calm within the breast,
"Is the dear pledge of glorious rest,
"Which for the church of God remains,
"The end of cares, the end of pains.

" In holy duties let the day
" In holy pleasures pass away ;
" How sweet a Sabbath thus to spend,
" In hope of one that ne'er shall end !"

EVILS OF PROFANING THE SABBATH.

1. It dishonors God. He has appointed the Sabbath, and commanded men to keep it holy. To profane it by worldly business, amusement, or in any other way, is disobedience to God; and is greatly to his dishonor.

2. It ensures his wrath. The Sabbath is God's day, he requires it to be set apart for himself. If men profane it, God is angry, and will visit them with his curse. They will be cursed in the city and in the field, in their basket and in their store; in their going out and in their coming in.

3. It is dangerous. Not unfrequently are persons called into eternity in the very act of transgression, to appear before God, where there is no more space for repentance.

4. To profane the Sabbath exposes a man to the loss of his soul. This is an evil, great beyond description. For what can a man give in exchange for his soul ? A man may lose his property, his reputation, his health, and even his life, and yet be happy : but if he lose his soul, he must be eternally wretched. To profane the Sabbath, then, is a tremendous evil. If continued, it will shut the soul out of heaven, and sink it into everlasting darkness and despair.

5. The person who profanes the Sabbath, does much, by his example, to destroy the souls of others. One such sinner destroys much good. He will lead all those who follow him, down to the pit of wo.

Reader, remember the Sabbath-day, and keep it holy. If sinners entice you to profane it, consent not : for if you do profane it, you will dishonor God. You will incur his

wrath. You will be in danger of immediate judgments. You will expose your own soul to destruction; and you will do *much* to destroy the souls of others.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S DAY.

1. ORDER all your weekly business so wisely beforehand, that you may have no unnecessary work on God's day; that your hands may be as free as possible from business, and your head from worldly cares and thoughts.

2. Think seriously: what a weighty work am I going about! My week affairs are but toys and trifles to this. What are sheep and oxen, or shops and goods, to grace, Christ, and heaven? Can I be too careful and serious in God's work? in the work of salvation? Surely no. How holy should my thoughts be, how heavenly my discourse, how earnest my endeavors all the day long!

3. Therefore prepare with all your might; search your heart and life: find out

What your sins are, to confess, mourn over, and pray against.

What the mercies are you want for soul or body; for your friends, family, and nation.

What blessings you have received. and what thanks should be returned.

No. 103.

EVERY MAN

THE

FRIEND OR THE ENEMY OF CHRIST.

In some contests, they who are immediately concerned, are at liberty, or rather, it is their duty, to take neither part, because the thing contended for is indifferent in itself, or because both sides are in the wrong. There are others, wherein every man is obliged to favor, at least, if not to join himself to one of the parties engaged, because one of them is evidently in the right; and no man is allowed to be uninterested, when the cause of truth, justice, or virtue is involved. In the cause of religious truth, every man is a party, and his happiness is inseparably connected, not only with his thinking right, but in some measure also with his endeavoring to make others do the same. Happiness is the effect of true religion.

What, then, is it to be *for Christ*, and what to be *against him?* A man cannot be truly said to be *for* Christ, who only bears his name, and declares for him; since the Scriptures assure us, that not only they are against Christ who deny him before men in words, but they also "who profess that they know, but in *works* deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate;" of whom St. Paul tells us, "even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ."

Who, then, are *for him?* They, no doubt, of whom he says to the Father, "I have given unto them the words that thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee; and they have believed that thou didst send me. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept my word." "They that are Christ's," says St. Paul, "have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts."

But are there not a third or middle sort of men, who, in the strictness of these expressions, are neither for our Saviour, nor against him? No! Christ, who best knows his own, absolutely denies this. It is true, of good men some are

better, and of bad men some are worse than others. The good are not all equally the friends, nor the wicked all equally the enemies of Christ; and for these inequalities different degrees of reward and punishment are reserved in the determination of our Judge. It is also true, that the best of men sometimes fall into sin, and the worst sometimes perform good external acts. But then he, who is to pass sentence on us, knows perfectly where frailty ends and presumption and perverseness begin; knows who in heart and life is a good, and who a bad man, that is, who is on his part, and who against him.

Thus it appears, that, from the throne of God down to the nethermost hell, there is not, there cannot be, one moral being, who is not either the friend, or the enemy of Christ. In the one or other of these lights Christ must regard every man, and every man must regard himself, at the final judgment. On that great day, the Judge will pronounce but two sentences: to the good, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;" and to the wicked, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." At that day, there will be no man found, who will not tremble under the one, or triumph in the other of these sentences: none who will not be a fit object of either. Here is no middle judgment between *come* and *depart*, nor a middle region between heaven and hell, for the reception of him who is neither called as a friend, nor rejected as an enemy to Christ.

Are you, my friend, the enemy of Christ? If you are on Christ's part, what passion have you subdued, what appetite denied, what view of temporal profit or honor, though ever so inconsiderable, have you set aside, to please him? Or rather, what sense of his goodness, and your past ingratitude, do you even now feel, to prove to you that you are not wholly indifferent about him, his religion, or your place among his followers? You may "honor him with your lips;" but if your "heart is far from him," full well he knows it, for he is a searcher of hearts, and clearly sees where all the ardor of yours is placed, while he hath only the worthless compliment of your professions. This you may be experimentally convinced of, by an impartial consideration of your prayers, your faith, and the general tenor of your whole life.

Your *prayers* are seldom offered up to the absolute Disposer of all things; and offered with such an unaccountable coldness of heart, as testifies no affection, scarcely indeed a bare dependence.

Your *faith*, for want of a thorough conviction, or that close attention which the great things it sets before you demand, amounts to little more than a mere opinion as to the facts suggested in your creed. Such an opinion is too weak to have any material effect on your practice, too feeble to bring futurity into competition with the present objects of sense and appetite. Indeed, in so great a degree of dimness and confusion does the eye of your faith view things to come, that heaven hardly looks like happiness, or hell like misery, or either like a reality.

How unlike is your faith to that of a real Christian! His faith draws his very senses into its service. He believes, and therefore hears God speaking in his word; feels God moving in his heart; sees the judgment-seat of Christ, with the glories of heaven, and the horrors of hell, almost as clearly as if they were displayed before his eyes. Nay, he suffers the anguish of his Saviour's wounds in some degree as if the nails and spear had pierced his own flesh; and triumphs over sin and death in the resurrection of Christ, with a high degree of that joy he hopes to feel when he shall arise from the grave himself.

As to the general *tenor of your life*, an insensible stupidity damps and flattens all you think, or do, in relation to religion. Here you know nothing! Here you feel nothing! But, in regard to this world, you are all alive. How deeply read is your understanding here! How warmly engaged is your heart! And for the truth of these observations, I appeal to your own breast.

You are ready, it may be, to declare, with an affected humility, that it is the height of your ambition, in religious matters, to be an ordinary or middling Christian. Let others, you say, set up for singularity in holiness; for your part, you wish to be found even among the lowest class of Christians, and aspire only to a bare acquittal. And yet you want not your share of ambition and pride too. Misguided man. How miserably you mistake that for humility, which is but lukewarmness and indifference! But where is the humility of vilifying that religious warmth in others, which

you never felt? Know, unhappy man, that there is, there can be, no such mortal as a middling Christian. Neither the exalted joys promised, nor the shocking torments threatened, will suffer a thinking mind to be indifferent.

If your eyes are now open, look about you, and tell us where you are: surely not with Christ, but against him; with reprobates and wicked spirits, who, in their lusts, and in the pride of their hearts, have preferred rebellion to gratitude, infamy to glory, and hell to heaven.

Reflect feelingly on what Christ hath done for you, and as impartially on what you have done to him; and then see your ingratitude. He, the Son of God, hath died to save you, a poor, unworthy criminal, from endless infamy and misery: think how great that infamy and misery! and to bring you to endless glory and happiness: consider how high that glory! how infinite that happiness! How coolly you return this love, by your formal professions, your dry thanksgivings, your unwilling services, through which scarcely any footsteps of either your understanding or affections are to be traced. On the other side are found all your positive sins; your vile thoughts; your false, profane, or seducing discourse; all imagined, uttered, committed directly against him who died for you.

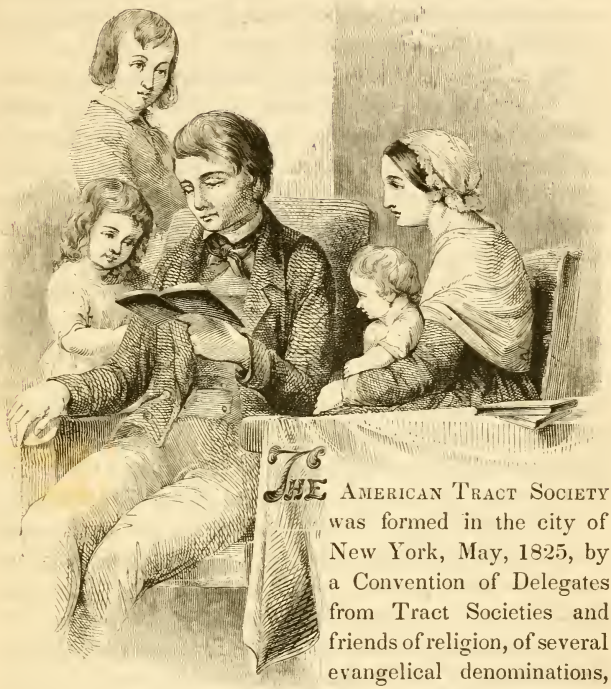
Know, mistaken man, that you are in a state of rebellion against the Sovereign of the world, and at war with the Almighty. If your forces are sufficient to maintain this war, and your armor proof against this two-edged sword, go on; but no longer say you are a Christian. There is not less sense, and more consistency, in directly contending with God, than in pretending to be his servant, and yet fighting against him.

Your case, then, will not admit a moment's delay; neither is there any medium between being "for Christ, and against him." Salvation is found only in being for him, condemnation only in being against him. Awake, consider this, ere it is too late, and choose your side; BUT CONSIDER IT WITH YOUR WHOLE UNDERSTANDING, AND CHOOSE WITH YOUR WHOLE HEART; FOR REMEMBER—YOU CHOOSE FOR ALL ETERNITY

PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY.

No. 104.

USEFULNESS OF TRACTS.



THE AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY was formed in the city of New York, May, 1825, by a Convention of Delegates from Tract Societies and friends of religion, of several evangelical denominations, and from different parts of the country.* Its sole object is to promote the great design of the Saviour's mediation and death, by diffusing the truths and doctrines of his gospel. It was founded in prayer, and

* The Publishing Committee of this Society embraces no two members from the same denomination, and no Tract is published unless unanimously approved. All the other concerns of the Society are conducted under the direction of an Executive Committee, elected annually by the Board. The labors of all the Society's Committees, and of its President and Treasurer, are performed without any pecuniary compensation.

dependence on the blessing of the Holy Spirit; and the facts related in the following pages, of the authenticity of which the Committee have the most satisfactory evidence, will show to some extent how richly that blessing has been bestowed, to the praise and glory of divine grace.

The large public meeting, at which the Society was formed, was one of deep solemnity. The last words which the lamented Rev. JOHN SUMMERFIELD ever addressed to a public audience, were delivered at the close of that meeting. "In all the anniversaries," said he, "which I have ever attended, in Europe or America, I have never been so conscious of the presence of the Holy Spirit and Christian love pervading every heart. Again and again I could not refrain from weeping. The very atmosphere we breathe is the atmosphere of heaven; one which angels come down to inhale, and in which God himself delights to dwell."

At the Society's first anniversary, its character, design, and the evidences of the divine approbation upon its work, were presented as follows, in an Address of Rev. JUSTIN EDWARDS, D. D., one of the members of the Publishing Committee.

The object of this Society is to deliver immortal souls from a course of eternal sinning and eternal suffering; to transform them into the perfect image of God, and raise them to a state of eternal holiness and bliss in heaven.

The means by which we are to accomplish this, is the dissemination of the truths which God has revealed, in the form of interesting and impressive religious Tracts. I say, *the truths which God has revealed;* for no other truths will accomplish this glorious end: such truths, for instance, as the utterly lost condition of sinners, and their indispensable duty, without delay, to love God with all their heart, and soul, and strength, and mind; the necessity of being born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; the infinite dignity, divine beauty, excellence and glory of Him on whom their help is laid;

his amazing condescension in becoming a servant, and having not where to lay his head; his unparalleled kindness in bearing their sins in his own body on the tree, and having laid on him the iniquity of them all; the necessity of believing on him in order to be interested in the blessings of his salvation; that every person to whom he is made known is under immediate obligation to embrace him, repent of sin, and live not unto himself, but unto him that died for sinners and rose again; that a day is coming when "all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation;" that the wicked will go away into eternal punishment, and the righteous into eternal life. These are the truths, with kindred truths, in their divinely inspired aspect and connection, stamped in bold relief on the face of religious Tracts, and extended to every city, and town, and village, and family, and soul; by which this Society is to aid in renovating a world, and preparing a "multitude that no man can number," to shine in the beauty of holiness, and shout the triumphs of grace to everlasting ages.

These are the truths which were proclaimed on the hills and in the vales of Judea; by which the fishermen of Galilee, and men of like spirit, went out, and unarmed, in the face of an opposing world, planted the standard of the cross on the throne of the Cæsars. These are the truths which blazed at the Reformation, scattered the darkness of papal midnight, and kindled a light that will "grow brighter and brighter, even to the perfect day." These truths, as they go forth, "proclaiming deliverance to captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound," and pointing them to "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world," will cause tears of contrition to drop down from ten thousand eyes, and ten thousand hearts to pour forth their strains of gratitude in hallelujahs to the Redeemer.

These truths it is our duty to extend, not merely because we have associated for this purpose, but because God has revealed them, and commanded us to extend them to every creature. And, if I do not mistake, sir, there are some peculiar reasons why we, in this country, should extend them by means of religious Tracts.

We are a great people, and, if not blasted by our sins, shall become greater and greater, till the light of revealed truth, and the light of human science, the light of true religion, and the light of civil and religious freedom, shall blaze from one end of this continent to the other, and with a brightness that shall illumine the world. We are called by the God of heaven to make an experiment; and one of the most momentous that was ever intrusted to mortals.

Blessed with a country of almost unparalleled extent; settled by a people of invincible energy, of ceaseless action, and untiring perseverance; enjoying civil and religious liberty to a greater extent than any other people on the globe; holding property of every description, and to any amount, in pure fee-simple, with the strongest motives bearing upon the mass of minds, to the highest possible effort, we must make a development of character, such as creation never witnessed; and rise to a height of goodness and greatness, from which we shall be the benefactors of the world, and instruments in bearing its millions to glory, or from which we shall sink, under a load of guilt, such as earth never bore, to endless perdition. Ah, then there would be shouting through all the world of darkness, and among all the sons of darkness, through the universe; ages of darkness, which the gospel has heaved away, would roll backward, and cover millions and millions in deep and everlasting gloom.

And are we in no danger of this? We are a republic; with no government but that which rests on the will of the people; and which cannot be perpetuated without holiness

among the people. Some may say, it cannot without *public virtue.* But public virtue never did exist, sufficient to perpetuate a republican government over such an extent of country as ours, without holiness, and it never will. This holiness is not the natural growth of a single heart in the land. No means will produce it, but the means of God's appointment. Of these means a vast portion of our countrymen are now destitute. Millions and millions, increasing every day, are destitute of that influence which is so essential to the preservation of all our social, civil, and religious blessings. Nor is this all: but each individual of these millions has a soul worth a thousand worlds. And without holiness they had better had no existence; for they will spend it in weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. While I speak it, I see them borne onward towards the close of their probation, destitute of that holiness without which no one can see the Lord, and destitute of the means of holiness which God has appointed.

What, then, shall be done? Send them living preachers? You have not got them. Thousands, with the ardor of Paul, with the eloquence and might in the Scriptures of Apollos, are needed to-day, in order fully to supply this country. Do you say, "Encourage Education Societies, and train up pious young men for the ministry?" By all means. Let these efforts be vastly increased, and prosecuted with all possible vigor, and generation after generation will pass away before they can all have the regular and stated ministrations of the Gospel. Do you say, "Send them the Bible?" By all means. Let efforts to extend it be increased and increased, till there shall not be a family, from one end of the land to the other, that has not the sacred volume. But then multitudes will not read it; and multitudes more will act directly against its holy dictates.

What, then, shall be done? Take the truths of the Bible, and, in "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn," stamp

them on the pages of religious Tracts; multiply these Tracts by thousands and millions; send them forth, attended, in answer to prayer, by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, to every city, and town, and neighborhood, and family, till all shall see Him who was rich, for their sakes becoming poor, that they, through his poverty, might be rich. And as they see him "bearing their sins in his own body on the tree," and hear him cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and the sun shrinks away, the rocks break asunder, and the dead start from their graves, there will be mourning; yes, there will be a *very great* mourning, and there will be a great turning unto the Lord our God.

Does any one say that many parts of the land have the Gospel, and therefore it is not needful to send Tracts to them? A town in the very centre of one of the most favored states in the Union had the Gospel; they had a minister of Christ; but, like many of his brethren, he was ready to say, "I have labored in vain, and spent my strength for nought," till he obtained a religious Tract, and under the reading of that, *eight* persons were convinced of sin, and found no rest till, as it is hoped, they embraced the Saviour; and when he who was watching for their souls related this account, they were all members of the church, and adorning their profession by a godly example.

Another town had the Gospel. Sermon after sermon was preached, but passed away unheeded, till a religious Tract was read, when a revival of religion commenced, which issued in the hopeful conversion of more than *forty* persons.

Another town had the Gospel, and the ordinary means of grace; but the people grew stupid, and still more stupid, till a Tract was read, and no less than twelve persons were made to feel that, "without holiness," they could not "see the Lord;" and they obtained no rest till, as they hope, they became the sincere followers of Christ. Others became

alarmed, the conviction spread to others, and to others, till it issued in the hopeful conversion of *more than one hundred persons*.

Ministers of the Gospel, whose praise is in all the churches, have testified, that they have often found the distribution of Tracts, apparently, as useful as all their other labors. A president of one of our distinguished colleges informed me, that, during a revival of religion in college, religious Tracts were circulated among the students, which were read with great eagerness, and with the most manifest advantage.

Are not, then, Tracts needful for such places? Yes, for *all* places. A man in the habit of distributing them among those who have not the Gospel, once called at a cottage on the side of a mountain, and, as usual, asked the inmates if they loved the Lord Jesus Christ. "O yes," the woman replied, "he is precious to my soul, altogether lovely." He asked her what were the means of leading her to Christ. "A man," said she, "once left here a small Tract. When he was gone, my child read it aloud, and it made me feel as if I was lost for ever." Her impressions deepened and deepened, till she discovered the way of salvation through a crucified Redeemer, hopefully embraced him, and found rest to her soul. Her husband, too, said, "He gave me a Tract, and since then I hope the Lord has showed mercy to my soul." "O," said the woman, "that I could see that man again." "Well," said the man, "I am he."

Another man who had been in the habit of distributing Bibles and Tracts among the destitute, was afterwards informed by letter, that more than *thirty* individuals in one town, besides the writer of the letter and his wife, were all now rejoicing in hope, through his instrumentality.

I know the man, sir, who has had evidence of more than one hopeful conversion from a Tract, in a family which had not the Gospel, and *had never seen a Bible*. Tracts are

useful everywhere, and we must send them to every family throughout the country.

Does any one say, "This is impossible?" No; it is not impossible. A single individual has been known to circulate 70,000 Tracts in a year. Suppose that each went into a family, and was read by three persons besides him who received it; this single individual may have been the means, through the instrumentality of Tracts, of preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ to 280,000 souls. Let this be continued for ten years, and this single individual might speak to 2,800,000, and tell them words by which they and those around them may be saved.

This Society may, with the blessing of God, establish Depositories in every county of every state in the Union, form Auxiliary Societies around every Depository, and soon put in circulation 12,000,000 of Tracts, equal to one for every man, woman, and child, in the country; and if, in this distant world, and while looking through a glass darkly, we may see distinctly the reading of one Tract connected with the hopeful conversion of eight persons, and another of forty, and another of one hundred, what may we not hope to see, in the light of eternity, from the reading of 12,000,000, which this Society in a few years may put in circulation. An amazing price, sir, is put into the hands of this Society, and if improved, will, through grace, be instrumental in preparing multitudes for glory.

"No doubt," says one, "they may be exceedingly useful; but to circulate so many will *cost too much*." How much, then, will it cost? $10,000 will put in circulation 1,000,000 Tracts, or of Tracts of four pages, nearly 2,500,000; equal to one for every family in the country. And if the expense were borne by every family, it would be for each not more than one half-cent in a year; and the avails of these, if sold at cost, may put in circulation as many more, and the avails of those as many more, and so on, down

to the end of the world. Is this too much for the purpose of putting in circulation 2,500,000 Tracts; 6,000 of which may be furnished for $20, and one of which has, in more than twenty cases, been the means of the hopeful conversion of a soul worth a million of worlds? Ten times this sum has been expended, in this country, upon a single horse-race! A million of dollars can be raised in a single city, or town, at almost any time, for a single manufactory! $7,000,000 can be raised, in a single state, for a canal!

"This," says one, "is a great and noble object. It promotes improvements, opens communications, and facilitates intercourse between one part of the country and another." I acknowledge it is a great and noble object. And is there nothing great, nothing noble, in the everlasting improvement of 12,000,000 minds? in showing a path, and facilitating their progress on their way to glory, and onward, from glory to glory, to everlasting ages? More than 3,000 times what it would cost to put in circulation, annually, a million of Tracts, is expended in this country, every year, for a single article, not of living, but of dying; an article which costs the country annually, 30,000 lives, and renders utterly wretched 200,000 more. Let us not hesitate a moment about the expense of putting in circulation annually a few millions of Tracts; but raise the money, and expend it most cheerfully for the Lord of hosts.

But can the money be raised? I answer, it can. I know the individual who once asked a poor man if he would not give something to make his minister a life member of the Tract Society; and he answered, "Yes, I will give a dollar; for one of those Tracts has saved me from ruin."

I know the individual who has worked for one dollar a week, and worked hard too, for nearly twenty years, who, on hearing the effects of a Tract, said, without being asked, I will give $20 to print it, and to keep it in perpetual cir-

culation; for I have no doubt that it has been the means of saving multitudes.

I know the individual who, when asked by an agent of the Tract Society to give something, said, "Who sent you here?" he answered, "The Lord, I trust." "Well," said the person, "I believe he did; for I have had $20 laid up a long time for the Tract Society, and have been waiting for some one to come and take it."

Money can be raised; and the country can never be considered as supplied till half the families have a single copy of at least half the Tracts. And it would be exceedingly useful, if every family of children could have access to a set of the whole. No books, except the Bible, would be more likely to promote their salvation. I know the man who, when a boy, had access to a set of Tracts, and became interested in reading them, and impressions were fastened upon his mind that will never be effaced; and the effect of his conversion is already felt through this land.

I know a man who, when a boy, had access to similar Tracts, whose mind was arrested, whose heart was softened, and hopefully renewed, through their instrumentality; and, I was going to say, all Africa will one day bless God for his conversion. But I see him rise upward, leaving this revolted world and taking possession of that "rest which remains for the people of God." Lately, he was here. I saw him go from place to place, pleading the cause of Africa, taking her sons and her daughters, and gathering them into a church of Christ. I saw the big tear trickle down their sable cheeks as they experienced his kindness; I saw him collect the furniture of their communion-table, gather for them a church library, obtain a printing-press, and go, with his little flock, embracing all the elements of a civilized and Christian community, and plant them, with their brethren, in the land of their fathers. I heard Africa begin to sing—when the Lord had need of him, and he

winged his way to glory. But his mantle will fall, his prayers be answered, and all Africa will yet bless God for his conversion.

I know the man, sir, who, when a boy, through the kindness of a relative, had access to a parcel of Tracts; the very same which you are now publishing and circulating; and he was led to think of the kindness of Christ, to feel his obligations to him, and resolve, in his strength, that he would henceforward "live, not unto himself, but unto him that died for him and rose again." And he has ever since been experiencing that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." Numerous destitute settlements, all along our frontiers, the savages in our Western wilderness, the pagans in the islands of the seas, and throughout Asia, will one day bless God for his conversion.

And we must do vastly more than merely to supply our own country. The Canadas, Mexico, and all South America, are calling upon us to help them; many are now able to read among our Western Indians, thousands at the Sandwich Islands, and more than 10,000,000 in countries around the Mediterranean. Said a gentleman who visited those countries, to men who, before he left home, had furnished him with Tracts for distribution, "I thank you, gentlemen, a thousand times, for the Tracts. I had been told that it was of no use to think of offering Tracts to Italians, Greeks, Portuguese, and Spaniards; they would not read them. But, gentlemen, I know better. You have no idea how welcome the Tracts were in all the ports at which we touched, around the Mediterranean. The people ran after me in the streets, and pulled me into their houses, in order to obtain them; and that, too, after I had distributed all that I had. I could hardly pacify them, but by telling them that when I came again I would bring them more."

Printing-presses are now in operation in connection with

the American mission at Malta. Give them the means, and Tracts, as cheap as they can be furnished in this country, may be printed in Greek, and Italian, and French, and Arabic, and Armenian, and extended to 10,000,000 people, multitudes of whom are almost entirely destitute of the means of grace. $1,000 may put in circulation 100,000 Tracts. Here, then, is a way in which men may, from love to Christ and to souls, through the medium of this Society, employ property in a manner which, while it does not make them poor, will make many rich, and secure an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

Thousands and thousands are now perishing, for the want of Tracts, on the Island of Ceylon. "We visit," said a missionary, "from two to eight families in a day; sometimes we take long journeys, and are out six or eight days. At such times we take a number of boys from the schools, and we exceedingly need Tracts. As we pass from village to village, where the Gospel was never preached, we find hundreds who can, and would read, had we Bibles or Tracts to give them; but, alas! we have none: no Bible, no Tract to show the poor heathen how to flee from the wrath to come. Oh, that we could get a supply printed. Into how many villages might the Gospel be sent by means of Tracts: and how many souls, by a single Tract, might be saved from endless misery."

And shall the missionary who has left his father's house, his native land, and gone 13,000 miles to tell the dying pagans of a Saviour, cry in the ears of a thousand churches, abounding in wealth, "Oh, that we could get a supply of Tracts printed. Into how many villages might the Gospel be sent by means of Tracts, and how many souls might be saved by a single Tract from endless misery"—and yet cry in vain? Let those churches answer.

At Bombay is a printing-press, in the midst of a population, speaking the same tongue, of 11,000,000 of people; nearly all of whom are destitute of the Gospel, and among whom Tracts might be circulated to the utmost advantage. A strong feeling of doubt and uncertainty exists in the minds of multitudes throughout that country with regard to their own religion. Numbers have come to the conclusion that it is false. Multitudes are halting between two opinions, and all are becoming impressed with the expectation that a great change is approaching. In this state, they greatly need Tracts, and many strongly desire them. Individuals have come twenty miles, and in some cases thirty and forty miles, to obtain a Tract. And, writes a missionary, "Tracts may be printed at Bombay as cheap as in America; and in no part of the world can they be distributed to greater advantage. Many of the people would be likely to receive more instruction from a little Tract, which they could read in five minutes, than from the whole of the New Testament; because they would be so much more likely to read it."

Writes another missionary, "The distribution of Tracts is the only possible way in which we can exhibit any portion of the Gospel to *vast multitudes of the present generation* of India. Ministers enough to go and preach to them the Gospel, cannot be obtained. We must print and circulate Tracts, or millions and millions of the present and future generations must go down without the Gospel, in unbroken succession, to the grave."

And these millions, Mr. President, exceedingly need Tracts; for they are exceedingly wretched, even for this life. A man who has resided among them twenty years, for the purpose of investigating their spiritual condition, told me that he knew of a numerous class with whom it was an article of religion not to suffer a single female child to live. One of them, however, on the birth of a

daughter, being overcome by natural affection, resolved to preserve her life. He secreted her, and intended, unknown to his countrymen, to preserve her to mature years. He succeeded without its being known, till she was, I think, seven years old. Then it became known that he had in his house a daughter. And being abroad one day, he was so overcome with the scoffs of his countrymen, and with the obloquy which they cast upon him, that he returned, and with an axe hewed her in pieces.

And not only are they miserable in this life, but in death. A Hindoo of a thoughtful, reflecting turn of mind, but devoted to idolatry, lay on his death-bed. As he saw himself about to plunge into that boundless unknown, he cried out, "What will become of me?" "O," said a Brahmin who stood by, "you will inhabit another body." "And where," said he, "shall I go then?" "Into another." "And where then?' "Into another, and so on, through thousands of millions." Darting across this whole period, as though it were but an instant, he cried, "Where shall I go then?" And paganism could not answer. And he died, agonizing under the inquiry, "Where shall I go last of all?"

Another Hindoo lay on his death-bed; he, however, had seen a religious Tract, and had read it. It had led him to religious teachers, and to Christ. His friend, hearing of his sickness, came to see him, and found him in the last stage of disease; and as he bore up his languishing head, watching to see him breathe his last, the dying man broke out in ecstasy, "Sing, brother, sing." "What," said he, "shall I sing?" "Salvation," said he; "salvation, by the death of Jesus"—and winged his way to bow with ransomed millions before the throne.

Let us send Tracts to those sinners, and all other sinners on the globe: Tracts blazing with the effulgence of the *truths which God has revealed, in the aspect and connection*

in which he has revealed them, and attended, in answer to the prayers of God's people, by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; and multitudes out of every nation, and kindred, and people, and tongue, will assemble on Mount Zion, and open an everlasting anthem "unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood;" and every holy creature in the universe will cry, "Unto him be glory for ever and ever."

INFLUENCE OF TRACTS UPON INFIDELS.

As a respectable physician, who had long been an avowed infidel, was reading the Tract entitled *The Praying Negro*, he was led to reflect that he possessed a very different temper from that there exhibited. When *he* was injured, he was disposed to seek revenge; but this *pious person*, when injured, found relief in prayer to God. This produced a conviction of his sinfulness, guilt, and danger. He saw no hope of salvation by his own works; but felt himself a lost sinner. What then could he do, but look to that Saviour whom he had so long rejected as not worthy his regard. By faith in him, he obtained peace and comfort. He then collected his deistical books at home, and those which he had lent to his neighbors, and committed them to the flames. He found the Bible infinitely better. Recollecting one night that one of these books was lent to his minister, he knew not how to sleep till it was burned; but as the night was dark and stormy he concluded to wait till morning. Then neither the severity of the storm, nor the infirmities of his age, prevented the execution of his purpose. When he asked for the book, the minister was fearful that he might still doubt the truth and inspiration of the Scriptures, and so wish to read this book again. This had been his favorite author. But no sooner was it returned, than, with much emphasis, he said, "In the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ and these

witnesses, I now solemnly renounce all the errors contained in this book." He then cast it into the fire. He since warns, with much affection and faithfulness, those whom he had before led astray, and entreats them to renounce their errors and embrace the Saviour. His exertions are not in vain, Christians are animated, and sinners alarmed.

AN EMINENT LAWYER IN ALABAMA.

A volume of Tracts was presented in a school to the son of a lawyer of eminence in Alabama, who denied the authenticity of the Bible. As it lay on the mantel, he took it up one day, and his eye fell on the history of the *African Servant*, by Rev. Legh Richmond. His first impression was, that it must be a benevolent religion which should induce that eminent man thus kindly to regard the welfare of a poor negro: and as he read the narrative he could not restrain the conviction, that the same religion which was necessary for the salvation of the soul of the negro, was necessary also for himself. "This," says a Christian friend, "occurred about four months since; and at our communion, two weeks ago, he and his wife unitedly made a public profession of religion. He is a gentleman of fine talents and a highly cultivated mind, who was well acquainted with the Bible as a history, but had read it with strong prejudices against it, in consequence of reading most of the works opposed to it. He is now an active and useful member of the church. One of his first acts, after his conversion, was to appropriate a sum of money for the distribution of Tracts." Two or three years after, when the agent of the American Tract Society visited the place of his residence, he was called to preside at a public meeting in behalf of the Tract cause, delivered a very animated address, and headed the subscription with $20 for himself, and $10 for his children.

A YOUNG INFIDEL IN NORTH CAROLINA.

A Baptist clergyman of North Carolina says, that a young infidel in that state was walking by the side of a pond, when he discovered two leaves of a book partly in the water, which he took up, and soon perceived another fragment of a book lying at a little distance before him, and still farther on, a third. He took up the whole, and putting them together, they composed an entire Tract. The perusal of it so arrested his attention, that he read it again and again; and such were the impressions created in his mind, that he felt an unconquerable desire to read the Bible. He was ashamed that this wish should be known to any one; and devised a plan for *procuring a Bible by stealth*. He recollected a little pocket Bible in his grandmother's bookcase; went and made her a visit, and while looking at, and praising her library, secured the Bible under the folds of his coat, went home and read it in his retired chamber—embraced the Lord Jesus Christ, there set forth as crucified for a lost world, as his Saviour and Redeemer—and is now a member of the church, and an active Christian.

INFLUENCE OF TRACTS UPON THE PROFANE.

At the time of a revival of religion in a village in Vermont, a young man had become so profane that he would spend the silence of the night to invent blasphemies more horrid than he had heard or before conceived, and committing them to memory, would repeat them the next day in the presence of those who were laboring under the weight of conscious guilt. His father, having become a member of an Auxiliary Tract Society, brought home a parcel of Tracts, and addressing his son, said, "Here are some Tracts for you; I wish you would read them." The son replied, with an oath too shocking to repeat, "you may read them yourself." But passing the table on which they were

placed, the title "*Swearer's Prayer*" caught his eye, and thinking it would help him to be still more profane, he read it, and addressing his mother, said, "Mother, do you believe that Tract to be true?" "No doubt that he who wrote it, had reason to believe every word of it true," was the reply. "Then," said he, "I shall never swear again." He has since been received to the bosom of the church, as is believed, a humble and penitent Christian.

A SCOFFER AND BLASPHEMER.

An agent of the American Tract Society in Connecticut, says, I became acquainted with a man who, a few months ago, was a *scoffer and a blasphemer;* and so bitterly opposed to religion, in all its forms, that he actually prohibited his little daughter from attending the Sabbath-school. She continued incessant in pleading with him for permission to go, till at length he yielded to her entreaties. She went—received a Tract—carried it home—her father's curiosity was excited to know its contents—he read it—by the power of divine grace it fastened convictions on his mind—he was for some time almost in despair—till at length the Saviour was pleased to manifest himself to him—and he appears now to be a humble, devoted Christian.

INFLUENCE OF TRACTS ON THE INTEMPERATE.

A FATHER IN NEW YORK CITY.

A benevolent lady in the city of New York says, in 1825, when visiting for a Bible Association, I became acquainted with a family who by industry and frugality obtained a comfortable subsistence. Early in 1827 the mother's health declined; expenses were increased; and to complete their wretchedness, *the father exhausted his earnings at the dram-shop;* and, as might be expected, often personally

abused the family. The little furniture they had got by honest industry was taken from them for rent; and on leaving the city the succeeding April, the family were reduced to wretchedness. I called to take leave of them, and left for the father, as a parting present, *The Rewards of Drunkenness*. On my return to New York I ascertained where they had moved, and expected to find a scene of misery. But, on entering the room, I should have thought myself mistaken in the place, had I not seen and recognized my old friends. Neatness and comfort characterized the dwelling, and peace smiled on every countenance. It was Saturday evening, and evident to me, that the sacred rest of the Sabbath had been anticipated in the arrangements of the family. The mother discovered my pleasing surprise, and exclaimed, "*O, the Tract—the Tract—the Tract has got all these nice things! My husband never drank after you gave him the Tract. He seems to be a reformed man, and says the Tract has made him happy, and brought peace and plenty into his house.*"

AN INTOXICATED MAN SAVED FROM SUICIDE.

A Report of the New York City Tract Society says, a gentleman of respectable family and genteel appearance, while travelling on Long Island, near the city, indulged repeatedly in drinking ardent spirits, contrary, it would seem, to his usual practice; and before he was aware, became intoxicated. Deeply mortified at finding himself in this situation, he resolved, in a rash moment, to destroy himself, and for this purpose retired to the woods. After finding a suitable place, he took from his hat the handkerchief with which he intended to execute his dreadful purpose; but providentially, with the handkerchief he drew out from his hat a little Tract, which arrested his attention. It had on the title-page, *A Word in Season*. He perused it—it struck conviction to his heart—he instantly fell on his knees, and

cried to God to have mercy on him; and, after continuing for some time in earnest prayer, arose, and made his way to a neighboring house, where, happily, dwelt a pious Christian. Here he gave no sleep to his eyes, but spent the whole night, like Jacob, wrestling with God—and we trust he did not wrestle in vain. In the morning he returned to the city, thanking God for deliverance, effected through the instrumentality of the *Word in Season*.

THE TRACT AND THE PEACH ORCHARD.

A gentleman, formerly a member of my church, says a clergyman, being on a visit to a friend, expressed much anxiety to return home within a given time, as he had a large orchard of peaches which he wished to gather for the distillery. His friend remonstrated with him; but it availed nothing: he must go and gather his peaches for the distillery. "Well, if you must go," said his friend, "I will give you a Tract to read," and presented him *Kittredge's Address*. He accepted it, and read it; and soon after sent word to his friend, that instead of carrying his peaches to the distillery he had given them to his hogs; and further, that he had resolved never again to *suffer his mill to be used to prepare grain for the distillery*.

THE DRUNKARD'S HOME.

Some unknown person, says the Secretary of a Tract Society in Virginia, left in a tavern at S——, the Tract, *To Distillers*. On looking into it, the landlord observed on the cover an article entitled, "*The Drunkard's Home*," which drew his attention. He read it, and became considerably out of humor, wondering who could have left *that* in *his* house. The result, however, was, that *he took down his sign*, declaring that his house should never again be called "*The Drunkard's Home*."

INFLUENCE OF TRACTS ON REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

I knew, says a gentleman of New Hampshire, a circle of ladies who had been in the habit for more than a year of meeting almost every week for the purpose of religious reading. There was not among them one professor of religion. They had, however, read Baxter, and Doddridge, and many other works of a similar character; but, as yet, the ball-chamber and the party of pleasure presented attractions much more powerful, and much more congenial to their hearts. But on a certain evening—an evening ever memorable in the annals of that community—an evening on which the Holy Spirit designed to change the current of their moral feelings—a religious Tract was selected as the subject of their contemplations. It was put into the hands of a gay and thoughtless young lady, whose turn it was to read. She looked at the title; it was the *End of Time*, by Dr. Watts. She began to read—she paused—she attempted to proceed, but her heart was too full. She resigned her seat to a companion. The Tract was read. And the end of time, and the realities of eternity, were brought into close connection with the scenes of that evening. The influence extended from heart to heart, from family to family, from neighborhood to neighborhood, and in the short space of a few weeks, most of the individuals who first listened to the reading of the Tract, with *more than sixty others*, were led to place their hopes of salvation on Jesus Christ. That people had once been favored with the ordinances of the Gospel. A faithful and holy man had been their minister more than forty years. He had labored, he had prayed, he had plead with earnestness the cause of his Redeemer. But he had wept and mourned all his days over the hardness of impenitent sinners, and had gone down to his grave without ever witnessing a revival of religion. I well remember his

prayers—I have often witnessed his tears—and I remember also when the pious few followed his remains to the tomb, and with him buried all their hopes of enjoying a preached Gospel: and though years passed away, their hopes never revived till the reading of that Tract.

THE TRACT "POOR SARAH" IN A DESTITUTE SETTLEMENT.

A very striking instance of the usefulness of Tracts, writes a missionary, has occurred in the family of an aged and godly father and mother, residing some miles distant from me, in Ohio. These parents had seven sons and daughters, all married, and resident in their own immediate vicinity. In February last the aged father, anxious that the ordinances of the Gospel should be enjoyed by the families of his children and others, called on me, desiring my advice and assistance in obtaining for them a preacher of the Gospel. I could not aid him in this respect, but, as I bade him farewell, I put into his hand a few Tracts to read to his children and neighbors, among which was *Poor Sarah, or the Indian Woman*. The reading of this Tract was the apparent means of deeply convicting one of his married daughters, who shortly after was filled with joy and peace in believing. This circumstance, in connection with the reading of the same Tract, was the means of awakening another; others still, soon became deeply interested in the subject of religion; the aged father was urged to establish religious meetings on the Sabbath himself; and one and another of his children, by birth and by marriage, became seriously impressed, until, on my visiting them lately, I found twelve of the fourteen indulging—most of them rejoicing in—a hope in Christ. One of the remaining two was in great distress of mind—one only of the fourteen remained careless.

HOW TRACTS WERE USED IN A REVIVAL.

During an extensive revival, says a clergyman in Massachusetts, we have had opportunity to observe the effect of Tracts, and feel that they have been rendered powerful instruments in bringing sinners to Christ. This has been especially the case when they have been distributed with *particular reference to the feelings and character of individuals.* We have endeavored to distribute them discreetly, but have not hesitated to give, *to any one,* Tracts which inculcate the duty of immediate submission to God, repentance, and faith. When we have found an impenitent man who knew his guilt and felt his danger, and given those directions or warnings which, in our judgment, his condition required, it has been found important, in some instances, to leave with him a Tract *exactly adapted* to the state of his soul. The Tract which is given under such circumstances, is read with care—with tears. It is often the last thing an anxious soul reads before the eyes are closed in sleep. It probably lies on his pillow, and, it may be, directs his earliest thoughts when he awakes. It may be instrumental in giving form to the character, and shape to the destiny of an immortal being. The proper selection of a Tract for such an individual is vastly important. When we have found those who supposed they were reconciled to God, we have thought it important, that, to personal instruction and counsel, we should add something which the babe in Christ might carry with him, and from which he might obtain the means of growing in grace, of examining his heart, and of deciding respecting his religious character. In this respect, those Tracts which relate to Christian character and experience have been found exceedingly useful.

The summer past, writes a lady, we have been blessed with the gentle droppings of that grace which purifies the

heart; and not unfrequently have I heard those who were inquiring the way to Zion, refer to some sentence which they have observed *in a Tract*, as one that filled them with astonishing solemnity. Again, those who felt the joys of sins forgiven, and could exclaim, "None but Christ; he is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely," have often quoted some Tract which they delighted to peruse, because it expressed so entirely the language of their hearts.

ONE THOUSAND TRACTS IN ALLEGHANY COUNTY, NEW YORK.

An Agent in New York says, a young man in L——, being about to remove to Alleghany county, called at the Depository in Utica, and obtained about one thousand Tracts. These he caused to be faithfully distributed in the town where he had fixed his abode. Their distribution was soon followed by a general revival of religion. Between fifty and sixty professed converts to Jesus Christ were the fruits of this revival; and *nearly thirty of them traced their first serious impressions to the Tracts which had been put into their hands.*

WORK OF GRACE IN THE AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY HOUSE.

The Committee in their third Report say, an interesting work of Divine grace has, for several months, been apparent among the females employed in printing, folding, and stitching Tracts in the Society's House. An unusual seriousness was observed among them in February of the last year, and at no time have the influences of the Spirit seemed to be entirely withdrawn. Songs of praise have often ascended from their lips, while their hands have been active in folding those messages of truth; and many a Tract has

been wet with tears of sorrow for sin, and, it is hoped, of real penitence, before it has gone forth on its errand of mercy. Since the commencement of the work, forty-one different individuals have been employed in these departments of the Society's operations, fifteen of whom were previously members of the church. Of the remaining twenty-six, eighteen have, since the period above-mentioned, professed faith in Christ, and most of them have connected themselves with churches of different Evangelical denominations in the city.

A work of similar character, and simultaneous in its progress, has also been witnessed among the females engaged in the house of the American Bible Society.

USEFULNESS OF TRACTS AMONG THE HEATHEN.

Great, says the departed Rev. Dr. Milne, whose loss is lamented by every friend of China—great are our obligations to the Tract Society; and great is the necessity that exists in these pagan lands for the exercise of its beneficence. Tracts are soon read through, and easily carried about with one. They may be circulated more widely than the sacred Scriptures can. If we calculate either the price, or the persons capable of deriving profit from religious books among the Chinese, we shall find that *fifty* Tracts may be given away for the expense of *one* New Testament. A missionary among the heathen can carry a hundred Tracts in his hand; and he will ever find great satisfaction in leaving an appropriate one in the house where he has been visiting; or in putting one into the hands of those with whom he has been conversing; or dropping one in the highway, where it is likely to be taken up by some passing stranger; or in reading and explaining one to those who are inclined to hear. The Tract Society is a most important auxiliary in the work of converting the heathen to

Christ; and though, in comparison with Missionary and Bible Societies, it holds, in some respects, a lower place, in other respects its utility is more immediate, more extensive, and more apparent.

A BRAHMIN IN INDIA.

We are informed by Dr. Carey, that a distinguished Brahmin, who had, for four years, observed a vow of perpetual silence, in the temple of Kalee, and was worshipped as a god, and whose case was apparently the most hopeless of all the human family, was converted to Christianity by the reading of a Tract.

CONVERTS IN CEYLON.

Dr. J. Scudder, missionary at Ceylon, after urging the claims of that benighted country upon the American churches, says, "Glad tidings from this place have already reached you; and we number among those who have been rescued from heathenish darkness, *two, whose attention to the religion of the only true God was first awakened by religious Tracts.* One of them was a youth of high rank in Changane, who now rejoices in Jesus as his Saviour, and is almost daily, from house to house, and in other ways, making known this salvation to others. The other, a young man who resides near us, was led, from the attentive reading of the Tract, '*The Heavenly Way,*' to forsake his idols, and now stands a candidate for baptism and admission to the church. In the great day of account you will meet a number from among this people whose robes have, as I trust, already been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb; and what rapture will fill your breast, should you see this one and that one pointing to you in that day, and hear them saying, *Behold, there stands the friend who was instrumental*

in sending me a Tract, through which, under God, I, who was once a poor benighted heathen, have been brought to know Jesus. Blessing, and honor, and glory, and praise, be unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."

A communication from the mission here, relates the striking conversion of a young native by reading a Tract, and says, "*No method of doing good in Ceylon, or India, is so promising, with the same sacrifice, as the distribution of Tracts.* They are better adapted for general circulation than even the Scriptures, among such a population as we find here, who read but little; and they *feel not the sun, and sink not under the climate, as does the living missionary.*"

TESTIMONY OF DR. MARSHMAN.

"Of the *value of Tracts in missionary labor*," says Rev. Dr. Marshman, a most zealous missionary in India, "it is needless to speak. *Portions of Scripture, or Tracts, have had something to do in the conversion of almost every individual who has joined the Christian church in India.*"

LETTER FROM REV. DR JUDSON, IN BURMAH.

"I can spare time to write a few lines only, having a constant press of missionary work on hand; add to which, that the weather is dreadfully oppressive at this season. Poor Boardman has just died under it, and Mrs. Wade is nearly dead. Brother Wade and I are now the only men in the mission that can speak and write the language, and we have a population of above ten millions of perishing souls before us. The great annual festival is just past. During this festival I have given away nearly 10,000 Tracts, *giving to none but those who ask.* I presume there have been six thousand applicants at the house! Some come two or three

months' journey, from the borders of Siam and China—'Sir, we hear that there is an eternal hell. We are afraid of it. Doctor, give us a writing that will tell us how to escape it.' Others come from the frontiers of Cassay, a hundred miles north of Ava—'Sir, we have seen a writing that tells us about an eternal God. Are you the man that gives away such writings? If so, pray give us one, for we want to know the truth before we die.' Others come from the interior of the country, where the name of Jesus Christ is a little known—'Are you Jesus Christ's man? Give us a writing that tells about Jesus Christ.' Brother Bennett works day and night at the press; but he is unable to supply us; for the call is great at Maulmein and Tavoy, as well as here, and his types are very poor, and he has no efficient help. The fact is, that we are very weak, and have to complain, that hitherto we have not been well supported from home. It is most distressing to find, when we are almost worn out, and are sinking, one after another, into the grave, that many of our brethren in Christ at home are just as hard and immovable as rocks; just as cold and repulsive as the mountains of ice in the polar seas. But whatever they do, we cannot sit still and see the dear Burmans, flesh and blood like ourselves, and, like ourselves, possessed of immortal souls that will shine for ever in heaven, or burn for ever in hell—we cannot see them go down to perdition without doing our very utmost to save them. And thanks be to God, our labors are not in vain. We have three lovely churches, and about two hundred baptized converts, and some are in glory. A spirit of religious inquiry is extensively spreading throughout the country, and the signs of the times indicate that the great renovation of Burmah is drawing near. O, if we had about twenty more, versed in the language, and means to spread schools, and Tracts, and Bibles, to any extent, how happy I should be. But those rocks, and those icy moun-

tains, have crushed us down for many years. However, I must not leave my work to write letters. It is seldom that I write a letter home, except my journal, and that I am obliged to do."

MISCELLANEOUS EVIDENCES OF USEFULNESS.

INFLUENCE OF TWO TRACTS IN A MILITARY ACADEMY.

The late professor of ethics and chaplain of the Military Academy at West Point, (Bishop McIlvaine,) presented four Tracts to a student who called on him, two of which he requested him to read for his own personal benefit, and the other two, one of which was *The Last Hours of the Hon. Francis Newport,* to drop where some of his sceptical fellow-students would be likely to find them. One week afterwards, on Saturday afternoon, another student called on him and said, "You do not know me, sir—my name is ——;" and then burst into tears. For some time he could not utter a word. The professor, convinced what was the cause of his distress, said to him, "My friend, if, as I trust, your grief is connected with religion—if you desire to become a servant of God, be encouraged to open your heart to me, whose heart is already open to you." "I do desire to become a servant of God," said he. Deep emotion prevented his further utterance for a few moments. Being then asked what were the circumstances of his case, he replied, "A Tract was lying in my room last Saturday. I cannot imagine how it got there; but I took it up, read it, and it made a powerful impression upon my mind. It was *an account of the death of an infidel.*" On being requested to give some account of the previous state of his mind, he said he had not actually considered himself an infidel, but had been very profane, and in the habit of speaking lightly of religion, and nothing had effectually arrested his attention

till he read the Tract. He, not long after, gave evidence that he had been born of God, and united himself to the communion of the church. He soon manifested much anxiety for the student through whose instrumentality he had received the Tract. "To him, under God," said he to the professor, "next to you, sir, I owe an immeasurable debt; and, by the help of God, I will not let him alone till we have him among us." A few days after, he called upon the professor, with this very young man, from whom he had received the Tract, leaning on his arm: "Here he is, sir," said he; "the Lord has brought him." Unable to restrain his emotions at beholding what he hoped the Lord was doing for him, the professor threw his arms around his neck, and blessed him. "I can hold out no longer," said he; "this is not the first time; I have been often called. I can hold out no longer. I will be a servant of God, henceforth, for ever." It was in reading *The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain*, that he first felt his heart expanded with love to God, and bursting with the spirit of prayer. "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth." These two young men are now active members of the church of Christ; they have distributed thousands of Tracts among the destitute, the ignorant, and the perishing; they are both zealously engaged in the cause of Sabbath-schools: by one of them a school of a hundred children has been raised up, where, in a population of a thousand, the gospel has scarcely ever been preached: by one, among a people destitute of the regular means of grace, social meetings for prayer and instruction are held every week: by the instrumentality of one of them, as many as *ten*, who just now were dreadfully wicked, have been hopefully converted, and are so altered as to astonish their former companions. Both have made up their minds to consecrate their lives to the ministry of the Gospel, and will be, we trust, through many years, continually gathering new fruits in testimony of the unspeakable blessings which

may flow to the church and to the world *through the instrumentality of one religious Tract.*

A TRACT ENCOUNTERED BY A LITERARY GENTLEMAN.

An officer of a college, says the report of the Tract Society at Boston, called one morning on a neighboring clergyman, and being seated in a room alone, took up the Tract *Sixteen Short Sermons*. His attention was powerfully arrested. He read it through, and saw and felt himself to be a condemned sinner. At the same time he saw the sinner's only refuge—A CRUCIFIED REDEEMER. The reading of that Tract was the means, under God, to which he now attributes his first conviction of sin and his hope of pardon.

A SWEARER AND GAMBLER.

A minister of the gospel informed me, says an Agent in Alabama, that about two years ago he had a neighbor who was a profane swearer and gambler. The minister conversed with him as he had opportunity, and at length put into his hand *The Swearer's Prayer*. He at first determined to throw the Tract away without reading it; but influenced by curiosity, when he was alone he began to read it. When he had read the first page he paused and reflected thus: "This is the prayer which I have been offering nearly all my days!" He now saw the dreadful import of his oft-repeated prayer, and trembled with apprehension, lest God should grant his impious request. He read the Tract through, and stood still for some time reflecting what he should do. At first he resolved to go home, take his horse, and dissipate his serious impressions among a club of gamblers. But on reaching home he relinquished that resolution, and resorted to his Bible; he read it, but the more he read the more clearly he saw himself ruined by sin. In a few

days he was rejoicing in hope of pardon. Two or three months afterwards he united with the church at ——, and he has since given good evidence of being a true convert.

TESTIMONY OF A CLERGYMAN AT THE WEST.

Tract Societies, writes a clergyman at the West, are, under God, *the hope of this land;* and will be for years. The inhabitants are so mixed and multiform in their religions, that, except in a comparatively few favored spots, there are scarcely enough active Christians, of any one denomination, to support the preached Gospel. Nor are they a reading people. A book is too voluminous to be read. Tracts meet precisely our wants. They preach without pay—and they preach without fear—and they preach by day and at night —and they preach to parents and children—they preach short sermons and plain, and they can be changed frequently, and at small expense—and they stop while the hearer is sleeping, or when he grows impatient, and begin again when he is ready to hear—and they can bear insults without repining, and favor without becoming vain—contempt and scorn, and poverty, present to them no terrors—they rest as comfortably in the unthatched cabin as in citizens' palaces, and live as happily with the poor as those who fare sumptuously—they have no ears to hearken to terrible reports of fevers and pestilences in the wilds of the West—their sympathies are not confined to them that can best pay them, nor their efforts in saving to those who best entertain them. No. They go forth in the spirit of Gospel preachers—to the broken-hearted—to the lost—those wandering upon the mountains and in the wilderness—they go—*to preach the Gospel to the poor.*

No. 105.

THE

HAPPY WATERMAN;

OR,

HONESTY THE BEST POLICY.

A GENTLEMAN who was one day a passenger on the river Thames, observed on the stern of the boat these words: "HONESTY THE BEST POLICY." Taking notice of it, he determined to enter into conversation with the Waterman; and, inquiring into his situation in life, found that he had a wife and five children, and supported also an old father and mother-in-law by his own labor. The gentleman upon this was still more desirous to know why he had given such a title to his boat, and asked him the reason of it. "I can easily explain this to your satisfaction," answered the young man, "if you will give me leave;" and being desired to proceed, he spoke as follows:

"My father and mother died a few years ago, and left a large family; my father was a waterman, and I was his assistant in the management of a ferry-boat, by which he supported his family; on his death, it was necessary, in order to pay his just debts, to sell our boat. I parted from it even with tears: but the distress that I felt spurred me on to industry, for I said I will use every kind of diligence to purchase my boat back again. I went to the person who had bought it, and told him my design; he had given five *guineas* for it, but told me, as I was once the owner, that I should have it whenever I could raise five *pounds*. 'Shall the boat be mine again?' said I; my heart bounded at the thought, and I resolved to do my utmost in an honest and fair way to obtain my object.

"I was at this time married to a good young woman, and we lived in a small cottage. She was healthy, industrious, and careful. We loved one another dearly, and, united in our affections and our efforts, what might we not undertake? My father used to say to me, 'Always do what is right; labor diligently, and spend your money carefully; and God will bless your store.' We treasured up these rules, and determined to try the truth of them. My wife had long chiefly supported two aged parents: I loved them as my own—and the desire of contributing to their support, was an additional spur to my endeavors to repurchase the boat. I entered myself as a day-laborer, in the garden of our squire; and my wife was called occasionally to perform some services at the house; and employed herself in needle-work, spinning, or knitting at home; not a moment in the day was suffered to pass unemployed. We lived sparingly; not a shilling was spent at the ale-house, nor on any improper object; and by these means we were enabled to contribute a little both to the support of religion, and to real objects of charity; and also to drop, every week, a little overplus into a fairing-box, to buy the boat. If any accident or charity brought us an additional shilling, we did not enlarge our

expense, but kept it for the boat! The more careful we were, the more comfortable we felt, for we were more independent, and daily approached nearer to the object of our wishes. Our family indeed increased, but with it our friends increased also; for the cleanliness and frugality which furnished our cottage, and the content and cheerfulness that appeared in it, drew the notice of our rich neighbors; of my master and mistress particularly, whose rule was to assist the industrious, but not to encourage the idle. They did not approve of giving money to the poor; but in cold winters, or dear times, allowed us to buy things at a cheaper rate: this was *money to us*, for when we counted our little cash for the week's marketing, all that was saved to us by our tickets to purchase things at reduced prices, went into our 'little box.' If our children got a penny at school for a reward, or a present from a neighbor for any little service done, instead of buying gingerbread with it, they brought it home and gave it to their mother, saying it would help to buy the boat. I felt it my duty to teach them, from their infancy, to be obliging, industrious, and careful; recollecting that early habits are most lasting; and when we 'train up a child in the way he should go,' we have the assurance of God's promise, that 'when he is old, he will not depart from it.'

"Thus our little store insensibly increased from time to time, till one pound only was wanting of the sum so much desired; and often my dear wife and I used to remark, that the blessing of heaven was very observable in the success of our honest endeavors.

"But the following accident seemed to disappoint our hopes. Coming home one evening from my work, I saw in the road a small pocketbook; and on opening it, I found a bank note of *ten pounds*, which plainly enough belonged to my master, for his name was upon it, and I had also seen him passing that way in the evening: it being too late, however, to return to the house, I went on my way. When I

told my family of the incident, the little ones were thrown into a transport of joy. 'My dears,' said I, 'what is the matter?' 'O, daddy, the BOAT! the BOAT! we may now have two or three boats!' I checked them by my looks, and asked them if they recollected whose money that was. They said, 'Yours, as you found it.' I reminded them that I was not the real owner, and bade them think how they would all feel, supposing a stranger was to take our box of money, if I should happen to drop it on the day I went to buy back the boat. This thought had the effect on their young minds that I desired: they were silent and pale with the representation of such a disaster, and I begged it might be a lesson to them never to forget the golden rule of 'doing as they would wish others to do to them;' and never to turn aside from what God had made their duty. I also took this opportunity to explain to them, that the possession of the boat by dishonest means would never answer, since we could not expect the blessing of GOD upon *bad deeds*. Nothing, I think, sir, is of greater consequence than to embrace such opportunities for warning children against what is wrong; and for earnestly pressing upon their tender minds these principles of religion and morality, which are the means appointed by heaven for guiding their youthful minds to what is right. Early religious instruction has been an unspeakable blessing to me.

"To go on with my story: The next morning I put the pocketbook into my bosom, and went to my work, intending, as soon as the family arose, to give it to my master; but what were my feelings, when, on searching in my bosom, it was nowhere to be found! I hasted back along the road I came, looking diligently all the way, but in vain! there were no traces of any such thing. I would not return into my cottage, because I wished to save my family the pain I felt; and in the hope of still recovering the book, I went to my work, following another path which I recollected I had also gone by. On my return to the garden-gate, I was

accosted by the gardener, who, in a threatening tone, told me I was suspected; that our master had lost a pocketbook, describing what I had found, and that I being the only man absent from the garden at the hour of work, the rest of the men also denying that they had seen any such thing, there was every reason to conclude that I must have got it. Before I could answer, my distressed countenance confirmed the suspicion; and another servant coming up, said I was detected, for that a person had been sent to my house, and that my wife and family had owned it all, and had described the pocketbook. I told them the real fact, but it seemed to every one unlikely to be true; every circumstance was against me, and (my heart trembles to look back upon it) I was arrested, and hurried away to prison! I protested my innocence, but I did not wonder that I gained no credit. Great grief now oppressed my heart; my poor wife, my dear children, and my gray-headed parents, were all at once plunged into want and misery: instead of the ease and happiness which we were expecting, all our hopes were blasted at the very time when we were just arriving at the height of our earthly wishes; and what was worse, my character was tarnished, and all my ungodly fellow-servants, whose practices I had often condemned, were triumphing, and reviling religion on my account.

"My misery seemed almost complete; and under these accumulated sufferings I should certainly have sunk, if the consolations of religion had not borne me up. I knew, however, I was innocent; and in frequent and fervent prayer endeavored to 'commit my way unto the Lord, and trust in him.'

"I resolved that, having been the cause (though without any design) of the second loss of the property, I would offer the whole of our little store to make it good, as far as in my power; and accordingly sent for my dear wife, to give her this sad commission. But alas! when she came, I found this sacrifice could be of no avail, 'for,' said she,

'my master has been at the cottage, when I told him freely how you had found the note, but unfortunately had lost it again; and I added, that I was sure, both I and my husband would make the best return in our power; after which I produced our little fairing-box, and begged him to accept the contents, which had been so long raising, as all we had to offer:' but, sir," said the Waterman, "conceive my agony, when she added, that my master angrily refused, saying, that our being in possession of all that money, was of itself the clearest proof of my guilt; for it was impossible, with my large family, and no greater opportunities than my neighbors, that I could come honestly by such a sum; therefore he was determined to keep me in jail till I should pay the whole. My unhappiness was very great; however, my mind by degrees began to be more easy, for I grew confident that I should not trust in God and my own innocence in vain; and so it happened: one of my fellow-laborers proved to be the person who had picked up the pocketbook after I had dropt it, having come a few minutes after me along the same road to his work, and hearing that the suspicion had fallen altogether upon me, he was tempted to turn the accident to his own advantage, and conceal the property; which having kept in his own box for a few weeks, till he thought no suspicion would rest upon him, he went and offered the note for change, and being then suspected, my master had him taken up, and I was released.

"The second change, from so much misery to happiness, was almost too much for us. My master sent for me, and with many expressions of concern for what had passed, made me give him an account of the means by which I had collected the little fund that fixed his suspicions so strongly upon me. I accordingly related the history of it, as I have now done; and when I came to that part, where I checked my children for their inconsiderate joy, on their finding the note, he arose with much kindness in his looks,

and putting the bank-bill into my hand, he said, 'Take it: the bank-note shall be theirs. It is the best and only return I can make you, as a just reward of your honesty: and it will be a substantial proof to your children of the goodness of your instructions; for they will thus early see and feel the benefit of honesty and virtue!'

"This kind and worthy gentleman interested himself much in the purchase of my boat, which, in less than a week, I had in my possession. The remainder of my master's bounty, and the additional advantage of the ferry, have placed me in comfortable circumstances, which I humbly trust God will continue to us, as long as we continue our labor and honest diligence; and I can say, from my long experience, that the fruit of our own industry is always sweetest. I have now also the pleasure of being able to help others; for when a rich passenger takes my ferry, as my story is well known in the neighborhood, he often gives me more than my fare, which enables me to let the next poor person go over for half price.

"My employment in this way has become also a pleasure. I see the blessing of God on my honest and lawful industry; and when I go home to my family at night with my little earnings, I find it a paradise of domestic enjoyment. My wife, according as our slender circumstances will permit, is always contriving how she can make me happier at home than anywhere else. My children are waiting to share a father's smiles, and tell me all their little tales of what has passed during the day. And my little cottage, though poor, is always neat and clean, and orderly, and the habitation of peace. By never frequenting the ale-house, I save daily from sixpence to a shilling more than many others in my employment; and this, put into one of the *Savings Banks* lately instituted for the benefit of the poor, has amounted, last year, to twelve pounds. Vice and extravagance, sir, are the fruitful parents of misery; but godliness, as the Scripture says, 'is profitable

unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.'"

The gentleman was exceedingly pleased with the Waterman's story, and the piety of his remarks; and from this time, becoming acquainted with his family, he did him every service in his power, giving books and schooling to the little ones, and such things as would make the aged parents comfortable, as long as they survived. He was very desirous of knowing what became of the unfortunate fellow-laborer, who had so dreadfully gone aside from the principles of honesty; and he learnt that he was, after a short imprisonment, set at liberty by his master, at the earnest entreaty of the honest Waterman: and the thought of what he had done, together with the generosity of the Waterman, had so strong an effect upon this poor fellow, that he afterwards had it written upon his cottage door, DO AS YOU WOULD BE DONE UNTO. This simple and certain rule is the same to all ranks; it is the sum of the second table of the law; and the man who does not act under its influence, shows too plainly that he has never been changed by the renewing of his mind. For the Scriptures assure us that every man is by nature "dead in trespasses and sins," Eph. 2: 1; but when he becomes a new man, and is "created in Christ Jesus unto good works," the dispositions and affections of his mind are changed; and his devout, and regular, and honest conduct are the most certain evidences which we can have, that he is a Christian.

Christianity is not that empty and notional thing which many take it to be. It is not a mere name; a Sabbath ceremony; a compliance with the customs of a country. It changes a man's character and conduct; makes him contented, industrious, and useful, like this honest Waterman. And if it does not this, it wants the signature of heaven; and the man who professes it, while he maintains not a conversation becoming the Gospel, is only deceiving his own soul.

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